THE MONASTERY.

A ROMANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

LONDON;

AND FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO.,

AND JOHN BALLANTYNE, BOOKSELLER TO THE KING,

EDINBURGH.

1820.

INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE

FROM

CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK,

OF HIS MAJESTY'S —— REGIMENT OF INFANTRY.

TO

THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY."

SIR,

ALTHOUGH I do not pretend to the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, like many who I believe to be equally strangers to you, I am nevertheless interested in your publications, and desire their continuance; —not that I pretend to much taste in fictitious composition, or that I am apt to be interested in your grave scenes, or amused by those which are meant to be lively. I will not disguise from you, that I have yawned over the last interview of MacIvor and his

sister, and fell fairly asleep while the school-master was reading the humours of Dandie Dinmont. You see, sir, that I scorn to solicit your favour in a way to which you are no stranger. If the papers I enclose you are worth nothing, I will not endeavour to recommend them by personal flattery, as a bad cook pours rancid butter upon stale fish. No, sir! What I respect in you, is the light you have occasionally thrown on national antiquities, a study which I have commenced rather late in life, but to which I am attached with the devotion of a first love, because it is the only study I ever cared a farthing for.

You shall have my history, sir, (it will not reach to three volumes,) before that of my manuscript; and as you usually throw out a few lines of verse (by way of skirmishers, I suppose,) at the head of each division of prose, I have had the luck to light upon a stanza in the schoolmaster's copy of Burns, which describes me exactly. I love it the better, because it was originally designed

for Captain Grose, an excellent antiquary, though, like yourself, somewhat too apt to treat with levity his own pursuits:

'Tis said he was a soldier bred,
And one wad rather fa'an than fled;
But now he has quit the spurtle blade,
And dog-skin wallet,
And ta'en the—antiquarian trade,
I think they call it.

I never could conceive what influenced me, when a boy, in the choice of a profession. Military zeal and ardour it was not, which made me stand out for a commission in the Scots Fuzileers, when my tutors and curators wished to bind me apprentice to old David Stiles, Clerk to his Majesty's Signet. I say, military zeal it was *not*; for I was no fighting boy in my own person, and cared not a penny to read the history of the heroes who turned the world upside down in former ages. As for courage, I had, as I have since discovered, just as much of it as served my turn, and not one grain of surplus. I soon found out, indeed, that in ac-

tion there was more danger in running away than in standing; and besides, I could not afford to lose my commission, which was my chief means of support. But, as for that over-boiling valour, which I have heard many of *ours* talk of, though I seldom observed that it influenced them in the actual affair—that exuberant zeal, which courts Danger as a bride, truly my courage was of a complexion much less ecstatical.

Again, the love of a red coat, which, in default of all other aptitudes to the profession, has made many a bad soldier and some good ones; was an utter stranger to my disposition. I cared not a 'bodle' for the company of the misses: Nay, though there was a boarding-school in the village, and though we used to meet with its fair inmates at Simon Lightfoot's weekly Practising, I cannot recollect any strong emotions being excited on these occasions, excepting the infinite regret with which I went through the polite ceremonial of presenting my partner with an orange, thrust into my pocket

by my aunt for this special purpose, but which, had I dared, I certainly would have secreted for my own personal use. As for vanity, or love of finery for itself, I was such a stranger to it, that the difficulty was great to make me brush my coat, and appear in proper trim upon parade. I shall never forget the rebuke of my old Colonel, on a morning when the King reviewed a brigade of which we made part. "I am no friend to extravagance, Ensign Clutterbuck," said he; "but, on the day when we are to pass before the Sovereign of the kingdom, in the name of God I would have at least shewn him an inch of clean linen."

Thus, a stranger to all the ordinary motives which lead young men to make the army their choice, and without the least desire to become either a hero or a dandy, I really do not know what determined my thoughts that way, unless it were the happy state of half-pay indolence enjoyed by Captain Doolittle, who had set up his staff of rest in my native village. Every other per-

son had, or seemed to have, something to do, less or more. They did not indeed precisely go to school and learn tasks, that last of evils in my estimation; but it did not escape my boyish observation, that they were all bothered with something or other like duty or labour—all but the happy Captain Doolittle. The minister had his parish to visit, and his preaching to prepare, though perhaps he made more fuss than he needed about both. The laird had his farming and improving operations to superintend; and, besides, he had to attend trustee-meetings, and lieutenancy-meetings, and head-courts, and meetings of justices, and what not—was as early up, (that I always detested,) and as much in the open air, wet and dry, as his own grieve. The shop-keeper (the village boasted but one of eminence) stood indeed pretty much at his ease behind his counter, for his custom was by no means over-burthensome; but still he enjoyed his *status*, as the Bailie calls it, upon condition of tumbling all the wares in his

booth over and over, when any one chose to want a yard of muslin, a mouse-trap, an ounce of carraway, a paper of pins, the Sermons of Mr Peden, or the Life of Jack the Giant-Queller, (not Killer, as usually erroneously written and pronounced.—See my Essay on the true history of this worthy, where real facts have in a peculiar degree been obscured by fable.) In short, all in the village were under the necessity of doing something which they would rather have left undone, excepting Captain Doolittle, who walked every morning in the open street, which formed the high-mall of our village, in a blue coat with a red neck, and played at whist the whole evening, when he could make up a party. This happy vacuity of all employment appeared to me so delicious, that it became the primary hint, which, according to the system of Helvetius, as the minister says, determined my infant talents towards the profession I was destined to illustrate.

But who, alas, can form a just estimate of their future prospects in this deceitful world!

I was not long engaged in my new profession, before I discovered, that if the independent indolence of half-pay was a paradise, the officer must pass through the purgatory of duty and service in order to gain admission to it. Captain Doolittle might brush his blue coat with the red neck, or leave it unbrushed, at his pleasure; but Ensign Clutterbuck had no such option. Captain Doolittle might go to bed at ten o'clock, if he had a mind; but the Ensign must make the rounds in his turn. What was worse, the Captain might repose under the tester of his tent-bed until noon, if he was so pleased; but the Ensign, God help him, had to appear upon parade at peep of day. As for duty, I made that as easy as I could, had the sergeant to whisper to me the words of command, and bustled through as other folks did. Of service, I saw enough for an indolent man—was buffetted up and down the world, and visited both the East and West Indies, Egypt, and other distant places, which my youth had scarce dreamed of. The French I saw, and felt

too; witness two fingers of my right hand, which one of their cursed hussars took off with his sabre as neatly as an hospital surgeon. At length the death of an old aunt, who left me some fifteen hundred pounds, snugly vested in the three per cents., gave me the long-wished-for opportunity of retiring, with the prospect of enjoying a clean shirt and a guinea four times a-week.

For the purpose of commencing my new way of life, I selected for my residence the village of Kennaquhair, in the south of Scotland, celebrated for the ruins of its magnificent Monastery, intending there to lead my future life in the *otium cum dignitate* of half-pay and annuity. I was not long, however, in making the grand discovery, that in order to enjoy leisure, it is absolutely necessary it should be preceded by occupation. For some time, it was delightful to wake at day-break, dreaming of the reveillée—then to recollect my happy emancipation from the slavery that doomed me to start at a piece of clattering parchment, turn on my

other side, damn the parade, and go to sleep again. But even this enjoyment had its termination; and time, when it became a stock entirely at my own disposal, began to hang heavy on my hand.

I angled for two days, during which time I lost twenty hooks, and several scores of yard of gut-and-line, and caught not even a minnow. Hunting was out of the question, for the stomach of a horse by no means agrees with the half-pay establishment. When I shot, the shepherds and ploughmen, and my very dog, quizzed me every time that I missed, which was, generally speaking, every time I fired. Besides, the country gentlemen in this quarter like their game, and began to talk of prosecutions and interdicts. I did not give up fighting the French to commence a domestic war with the "pleasant men of Teviotdale," as the song calls them; so I e'en spent three days (very pleasantly) in cleaning my gun, and disposing it upon two hooks over my chimney-piece.

The success of this accidental experiment set me on trying my skill in the mechanical arts. Accordingly, I took down and cleaned my landlady's cuckoo-clock, and in so doing, silenced that companion of the spring for ever and a day. I mounted a turning lathe, and, in attempting to use it, I very nearly cribbed off, with an inch-and-half former, one of the fingers which the hussar had left me.

Books I tried, both those of the little circulating library, and of the more rational subscription-collection maintained by this intellectual people. But neither the light reading of the one, nor the heavy artillery of the other, suited my purpose. I always fell asleep at the fourth or fifth page of history or disquisition; and it took me a month's hard reading to wade through a half-bound trashy novel, during which I was pestered with applications to return the volumes, by every half-bred milliner's miss about town. In short, during the hours when all the town besides had something to do, I had

nothing for it, but to walk in the church-yard, and whistle till it was dinner-time.

During these promenades, the Ruins necessarily forced themselves on my attention, and, by degrees, I found myself engaged in studying the more minute ornaments, and at length the general plan, of this noble structure. The old sexton aided my labours, and gave me his portion of traditional lore. Every day added something to my stock of knowledge respecting the ancient state of the building; and at length I made discoveries concerning the purpose of several detached and very ruinous portions of the building, the use of which had hitherto been either unknown altogether, or erroneously explained.

The knowledge which I thus acquired, I had frequent opportunities of retailing, to those visitors whom the progress of a Scottish tour brought to visit this celebrated spot. Without encroaching on the privilege of my friend the sexton, I became gradually an assistant Cicerone in the task of

description and explanation, and often (seeing a fresh party of visitors arrive) has he turned over to me those to whom he had told half his story, with the flattering observation, "What needs I say ony mair about it? There's the Captain kens mair anent it than I do, or any man in the town." Then would I salute the strangers courteously, and expatiate to their astonished minds upon crypts and chancels, and naves, arches, Gothic and Saxon architraves, mullions and flying buttresses. It not infrequently happened, that an acquaintance which commenced in the abbey concluded in the inn, which served to relieve the solitude as well as the monotony of my landlady's shoulder of mutton, whether hot, cold, or hashed.

By degrees my mind became enlarged; I found a book or two which enlightened me on the subject of Gothic architecture, and I read now with pleasure, because I was interested in what I read about. Even my character began to dilate and expand.

I spoke with more authority at the club, and was listened to with deference, because on one subject, at least, I possessed more information than any of its members. Indeed, I found that even my stories about Egypt, which, to say truth, were somewhat thread-bare, were now listened to with more respect than formerly. "The Captain," they said, "had something in him after a', —few folk ken'd sae mickle about the Abbey."

With this general approbation waxed my own sense of self-importance, and my feeling of general comfort. I ate with more appetite, I digested with more ease, I lay down at night with joy, and slept sound till morning, when I arose with a sense of busy importance, and hied me to measure, to examine, and to compare the various parts of this interesting structure. I lost all sense and consciousness of certain unpleasant sensations of a non-descript nature, about my head and stomach, to which I had been in the habit of attending, more

for the benefit of the village apothecary than my own, for the pure want of something else to think about. I had found out an occupation unwittingly, and was happy because I had something to do. In a word, I had commenced local antiquary, and was not unworthy of the name.

Whilst I was in this pleasing career of busy idleness, for so it might best be called, it happened that I was one night sitting in my little parlour, adjacent to the closet which my landlady calls my bed-room, in the act of preparing for an early retreat to the realms of Morpheus. Dugdale's Monasticon, borrowed from the library at A——, was lying on the table before me, flanked by some excellent Cheshire cheese (a present by the way from an honest London citizen, to whom I had explained the difference betwixt a Gothic and a Saxon arch,) and a glass of Vanderhagen's best ale. Thus armed at all points against my old enemy Time, I was leisurely and deliciously preparing for bed—now reading a line of old Dugdale—now sipping my ale,

or munching my bread and cheese—now undoing the strings at my breeches' knees, or a button or two of my waistcoat, until the village clock should strike ten, before which time I make it a rule never to go to bed. A loud knocking, however, interrupted my ordinary process on this occasion, and the voice of my honest landlord of the George was heard vociferating, "What the deevil, Mrs Grinslees, the Captain is no in his bed? and a gentleman at our house has ordered a fowl and minced collops, and a bottle of sherry, and has sent to ask him to supper, to tell him all about the Abbey."

—"Na," answered Luckie Grinslees, in the true sleepy tone of a Scotch matron when ten o'clock is going to strike, "he's no in his bed, but I'se warrant him no gae out at this time o' night to keep folks sitting up waiting for him—the Captain's a decent man."

I plainly perceived this last compliment was made for my hearing, by way both of

indicating and of recommending the course of conduct which Mrs Grinslees desired I should pursue. But I had not been knocked about the world for thirty years and odd, and lived a bluff bachelor all the while, to come home and be put under petticoat government by my landlady. Accordingly I opened my chamber-door, and desired my old friend David to walk up stairs.

"Captain," said he, as he entered, "I am as glad to find you up as if I had hooked a twenty pound saumon. There's a gentleman up yonder that will not sleep sound in his bed this blessed night, unless he has the pleasure to drink a glass of wine with you."

"You know, David," I replied, with becoming dignity, "that I cannot with propriety go out to visit strangers at this time of night, or accept of invitations from people of whom I know nothing."

David swore a round oath, and added, "Was ever the like heard of? He has ordered a fowl and egg sauce, a pancake and

minced collops, and a bottle of sherry—D'ye think I wad come and ask you to go to keep company with ony bit English rider, that sups on toasted cheese and a cheerer of rum-toddy? This is a gentleman every inch of him, and a virtuoso, a clean virtuoso—a sad-coloured stand of claiths, and a wig like the curled back of a mug-ewe. The very first question he speered was about the auld draw-brig that has been at the bottom of the water these twalscore years—I have seen the fundations when we were sticking saumon—And how the deevil suld he ken ony thing about the auld draw-brig, unless he were a virtuoso?"

David being a virtuoso in his own way, and moreover a landholder and heritor, was a qualified judge of all who frequented his house, and therefore I could not avoid again tying the strings of my knees.

"That's right, Captain," vociferated David; "you twa will be as thick as three in a bed an' ance ye foregather. I haena seen the like o' him my very sell since I saw the

great Doctor Samuel Johnson on his tower through Scotland, whilk tower is lying in my back-parlour for the amusement of my guests, wi' the twa boards torn aff."

"Then the gentleman is a scholar, David?"

"I'se uphaud him a scholar," answered David; "he has a black coat on, or a brown ane, at ony rate."

"Is he a clergyman?"

"I am thinking no, for he looked after his horse's supper before he spoke o' his ain," replied mine host.

"Has he a servant?" demanded I.

"Nae servant," answered David; "but a grand face he has o' his ain, that wad gar ony body be willing to serve him that looks upon him."

"And what makes him think of disturbing me? Ah, David, this has been some of your chattering; you are perpetually bringing your guests on my shoulders, as if it were my business to entertain every man who comes to the George."

"What the de'il wad ye hae me do, Captain?" answered mine host; "a gentleman lights down, and asks me in a most earnest manner, what man of sense and learning there is about our town, that can tell him about the antiquities of the place, and specially about the auld Abbey—Ye wadna hae me tell the gentleman a lie, and ye ken weel eneugh there is naebody in the town can say a reasonable word about it, be it no yoursel', except the bedral, and he is as fou as a piper by this time. So, says I, there's Captain Clutterbuck, that's a very civil gentleman, and has little to do forbye telling a' the auld cracks about the Abbey, and dwells just hard bye. Then says the gentleman to me, 'Sir,' says he, very civilly, 'have the goodness to step to Captain Clutterbuck with my compliments, and say I am a stranger, who have been led to these parts chiefly by the fame of these Ruins, and that I would call upon him but the hour is late.' And mair he said that I have forgotten, but I weel remember

it ended—'And, landlord, get a bottle of your best sherry, and supper for two'—Ye wadna have had me refuse to do the gentleman's bidding, and me a publican?"

"Well, David," said I; "I wish your virtuoso had taken a fitter hour—but as you say he is a gentleman"——

"I'se uphaud him that—the order speaks for itsel'—a bottle of sherry—minced collops and a fowl—that's speaking like a gentleman, I trow?—That's right, Captain, button weel up, the night's raw—but the water's clearing for a' that, we'll be on't neist night wi' my Lord's boats, and we'll hae ill luck if I dinna send you a kipper to relish your ale at e'en."

In five minutes after this dialogue, I found myself in the parlour of the George, and in the presence of the stranger.

He was a grave personage, about my own age, (which we shall call about *fifty*), and really had, as my friend David expressed it, something in his face that inclined men to oblige and to serve him. Yet this ex-

pression of authority was not at all of the cast which I have seen in the countenance of a general of brigade, neither was the stranger's dress at all martial. It consisted of an uniform suit of raven-grey clothes, cut in rather an old-fashioned form. His legs were defended with, strong leatherr gambadoes, which, according to an antiquated contrivance, opened at the sides, and were secured by steel clasps. His countenance was worn as much by toil and sorrow as by age, for it intimated that he had seen and endured much. His address was singularly pleasing and gentleman-like, and the apology which he made for disturbing me at such an hour, and in such a manner, was so well and handsomely expressed, that I could not reply otherwise than by expressing my willingness to be of service to him.

"I have been a traveller to-day, sir," said he, "and I would willingly defer the little I have to say till after our supper, for which I feel rather more appetized than usual."

We sate down to table, and notwithstanding the stranger's alleged appetite, as well as the gentle preparation of cheese and ale which I had already laid aboard, I really believe that I of the two did the greatest honour to my friend David's fowl and minced collops.

When the cloth was removed, and we had each made a tumbler of negus of that liquor which hosts call Sherry, and guests call Lisbon, I perceived that the stranger seemed pensive, silent, and somewhat embarrassed, as if he had something to communicate which he knew not well how to introduce. To pave the way for him, I spoke of the ancient ruins of the Monastery, and of their history. But, to my great surprise, I found I had met my match with a witness. The stranger not only knew all that I could tell him, but a great deal more; and, what was still more mortifying, he was able, by reference to dates, charters, and other evidence of facts, that, as Burns says, "downa be confuted," to correct many

of the vague tales which I had adopted on loose and vulgar tradition, as well as to confute more than one of my favourite theories on the subject of the old monks and their dwellings, which I had sported freely in all the presumption of superior information. And here I cannot but remark, that much of the stranger's arguments and inductions rested upon the authority of Mr Deputy Register of Scotland, and his lucubrations; a gentleman whose indefatigable research into the national records is like to destroy my trade, and that of all local antiquaries, by substituting truth instead of legend and romance. Alas, I would the learned gentleman did but know how difficult it is for us dealers in petty wares of antiquity to—

Pluck from our memories a rooted "legend,"
Raze out the written records of our brain,
Or cleanse our bosoms of that perilous stuff—

and so forth. It would, I think, move his pity to think how many old dogs he has

set to learn new tricks, how many venerable parrots he hath taught to sing a new song, how many grey heads he has addled by vain attempts to exchange their own old *Mumpsimus* for his new *Sumpsimus*. But let it pass—*Humana perpessi sumus*—All changes round us, past, present, and to come; that which was history yesterday becomes fable to-day, and the truth of to-day is hatched into a lie by to-morrow.

Finding myself like to be overpowered in the Monastery, which I had hitherto regarded as my citadel, I began, like a skilful general, to evacuate that place of defence, and fight my way through the adjacent country. I had recourse to my acquaintance with the families and antiquities of the neighbourhood, ground on which I thought I might skirmish at large without its being possible for the stranger to meet me with advantage. But I was mistaken.

The man in the iron-grey suit shared a much more minute knowledge of these par-

ticulars than I had the least pretension to. He could tell the very year in which the family of De Haga first settled on their ancient barony. Not a Thane within reach but he knew his family and connections, how many of his ancestors had fallen by the sword of the English, how many in domestic brawl, and how many by the hand of the executioner for march-treason. Their castles he was acquainted with from turret to foundation-stone; and as for the miscellaneous antiquities scattered about the country, he knew every one of them, from a *cromlech* to a *cairn*, and could give as good an account of each as if he had lived in the time of the Danes or Druids.

I was now in the mortifying predicament of one who suddenly finds himself a scholar when he came to teach, and nothing was left for me but to pick up as much of his conversation as I could, for the benefit of the next company. I told, indeed, Allan Ramsay's story of the Monk and Miller's Wife, in order to retreat with some honour

under cover of a parting volley. Here, however, my flank was again turned by the eternal stranger.

"You are pleased to be facetious, sir," said he, "but you cannot be ignorant, that the ludicrous incident you mentioned is the subject of a tale much older than that of Allan Ramsay."

I nodded, unwilling to acknowledge my ignorance, though, in fact, I knew no more what he meant than did one of my friend David's post-horses.

"I do not allude," continued my omniscient companion, "to the curious poem published by Pinkerton from the Maitland Manuscript, called the Fryars of Berwick, although it presents a very minute and curious picture of Scottish manners during the reign of James V.; but rather to the Italian novelist, by whom, so far as I know, the story was first printed, although unquestionably he first took his original from some ancient *fabliau*."

"It is not to be doubted," answered I,

not very well understanding, however, the proposition to which I gave such unqualified assent.

"Yet," continued my companion, "I question much, had you known my situation and profession, whether you would have pitched upon this precise anecdote for my amusement."

This observation he made in a tone of perfect good humour. I pricked up my ears at the hint, and answered as politely as I could, that my ignorance of his condition and rank could be the only cause of my having stumbled on any thing disagreeable; and that I was most willing to apologize for my unintentional offence, so soon as I should know wherein it consisted.

"Nay, no offence, sir," he replied; "offence can only exist where it is taken. I have been too long accustomed to more severe and cruel misconstructions, to be offended at a popular jest, though directed at my profession."

"Am I to understand then," I answered,

"that I am speaking with a Catholic clergyman?"

"An unworthy Monk of the order of Saint Benedict," said the stranger, "belonging to a community of your own countrymen, long established in France, and scattered unhappily by the events of the Revolution."

"Then," said I, "you are a native Scotsman, and from this neighbourhood?"

"Not so," answered the Monk; "I am a Scotsman by extraction only, and never was in this neighbourhood during my whole life."

"Never in this neighbourhood, and yet so minutely acquainted with its history, its traditions, and even its external scenery! You surprise me, sir," I replied.

"It is not surprising," he said, "that I should have that sort of local information, when it is considered, that my uncle, an excellent man, as well as a good Scotsman, the head also of our religious community, employed much of his leisure in making me

acquainted with these particulars; and that I myself, disgusted with what has been passing around me, have for many years amused myself, by digesting and arranging the various scraps of information which I derived from my worthy relative, and other aged brethren of our order."

"I presume, sir," said I, "though I would by no means intrude the question, that you are now returned to Scotland with a view to settle amongst your countrymen, since the great political catastrophe of our time has reduced your corps?"

"No, sir," replied the Benedictine, "such is not my intention. A European potentate, who still cherishes the Catholic faith, has offered us a retreat within his dominions, where a few of my scattered brethren are already assembled, to pray to God for blessings on their protector, and pardon to their enemies. No one, I believe, will be able to object to us under our new establishment, that the extent of our revenues will be inconsistent with our vows of poverty and

abstinence; but, let us strive to be thankful to God, that the snare of temporal abundance is removed from us."

"Many of your convents abroad, sir," said I, "enjoyed very handsome incomes—and yet, allowing for times, I question if any were better provided for than the Monastery of this village. It is said to have enjoyed nearly two thousand pounds in yearly money-rent, fourteen chalders and nine bolls of wheat, fifty-six chalders five bolls barley, forty-four chalders and ten bolls oats, capons and poultry, butter, salt, carriage and arriage, peats and kain, wool and ale."

"Even too much of all these temporal goods, sir," said my companion, "which, though well intended by the pious donors, served only to make the establishment the envy and the prey of those by whom it was finally devoured."

"In the meanwhile, however," I observed, "the Monks had an easy life of it; and, as the old song goes,

—— made gude kale
On Fridays when they fasted.

"I understand you, sir," said the Benedictine; "it is difficult, saith the proverb, to carry a full cup without spilling. Unquestionably the wealth of the community, as it endangered the safety of the establishment by exciting the cupidity of others, was also in frequent instances a snare to the brethren themselves. And yet we have seen the revenues of convents expended, not only in acts of beneficence and hospitality to individuals, but in works of general and permanent advantage to the world at large. The noble folio collection of French historians commenced in 1737, under the inspection and at the expense of the community of Saint Maur, will long shew that the revenues of the Benedictines were not always spent in self-indulgence, and that the members of that order did not uniformly slumber in sloth and indolence, when they had discharged the formal duties of their rule."

As I knew nothing earthly at the time

about the community of Saint Maur and their learned labours, I could only return a mumbling assent to this proposition. I have since seen this noble work in the library of a distinguished family, and I must own I am ashamed to reflect, that in so wealthy a country as ours, a similar digest of our historians should not be undertaken, under the patronage of the noble and the learned, in rivalry of that which the Benedictines of Paris executed at the expence of their own conventual funds.

"I perceive," said the ex-Benedictine smiling, "that your heretical prejudices are too strong to allow us poor brethren any merit, whether literary or spiritual."

"Far from it, sir," said I; "I assure you I have been much obliged to Monks in my time. When I was quartered in a Monastery in Flanders, in the campaign of 1793, I never lived more comfortably in my life. They were jolly fellows the Flemish Canons, and right sorry was I to leave my good quarters, and to know that my honest hosts

were to be at the mercy of the Sans-Culottes. But *fortune de la guerre!*"

The poor Benedictine looked down and was silent. I had unwittingly awakened a train of bitter reflections, or rather I had touched somewhat rudely upon a chord which seldom ceased to vibrate of itself. But he was too much accustomed to this sorrowful train of ideas to suffer it to overcome him. On my part, I hastened to atone for my blunder. "If there was any object of his journey to this country in which I could, with propriety, assist him, I begged to offer him my best services." I own I laid some little emphasis on the words "with propriety," as I felt it would ill become me, a sound protestant, and a servant of government so far as my half-pay was concerned, to implicate myself in any recruiting which my companion might have undertaken in behalf of foreign seminaries, or in any similar design for the advancement of popery, which, whether the Pope be actually the old lady of Babylon or no, it did not

become me in any manner to advance or countenance.

My new friend hastened to relieve my indecision. "I was about to request your assistance, sir," he said, "in a matter which cannot but interest you as an antiquary and a person of research. But I assure you it relates entirely to events and persons removed to the distance of two centuries and a half. I have experienced too much evil from the violent unsettlement of the country in which I was born, to be a rash labourer in the work of innovation in that of my ancestors."

I again assured him of my willingness to assist him in any thing that was not contrary to my allegiance or religion.

"My proposal," he replied, "affects neither.—May God bless the reigning family in Britain! They are not, indeed, of that dynasty, to restore which my ancestors struggled and suffered in vain; but the Providence who has conducted his present Majesty to the throne, has given him the virtues

necessary to his time—firmness and intrepidity—a true love of his country, and an enlightened view of the dangers by which she is surrounded.—For the religion of those realms, I am contented to hope that the great Power, whose mysterious dispensation has rent them from the bosom of the church, will, in his own good time and manner restore them to its holy pale. The efforts of an individual obscure and humble as myself, might well retard, but could never advance a work so mighty."

"May I then enquire, sir," said I, "with what purpose you seek this country?"

Ere my companion replied, he took from his pocket a clasped paper book, about the size of a regimental orderly-book, full, as it seemed, of memoranda; and drawing one of the candles close to him, (for David, in strong proof of his respect for the stranger, had indulged us with two,) he seemed to peruse the contents very earnestly.

"There is among the ruins of the western end of the Abbey church," said he,

looking up to me, yet keeping the memorandum-book half open, and occasionally glancing at it, as if to refresh his memory, "a sort of recess or chapel beneath a broken arch, and in the immediate vicinity of one of those shattered Gothic columns which once supported the magnificent roof, whose fall has now encumbered that part of the building with its ruins."

"I think," said I, "that I know whereabouts you are. Is there not in the side wall of the chapel, or recess which you mention, a large carved stone, bearing a coat of arms, which no one hitherto has been able to decypher?"

"You are right," answered the Benedictine, and again consulting his memoranda, he added, "the arms on the dexter side are those of Glendinning, being a cross parted by a cross indented and countercharged of the same; and on the sinister three spur-rowels for those of Avenel: they are two ancient families, now almost extinct in this country—the arms party *per pale.*"

"I think," said I, "there is no part of this ancient structure with which you are not as well acquainted as was the mason who built it. But if your information be correct, he who made out these bearings must have had better eyes than mine."

"His eyes," said the Benedictine, "have long been closed in death; probably when he inspected the monument it was in a more perfect state, or he may have derived his information from the tradition of the place."

"I assure you," said I. "that no such tradition now exists. I have made several reconnoissances among the old people, in hopes to learn something of the armorial bearings, but I never heard of such a circumstance. It seems odd that you should have acquired it in a foreign land."

"These trifling particulars," he replied, "were formerly looked upon as more important, and they were sanctified to the exiles who retained recollection of them, because they related to a place dear indeed to memory, but which their eyes could never

again behold. It is possible, in like manner, that on the Potowmack or Susquehana, you may find traditions current concerning places in England, which are utterly forgotten in the neighbourhood where they originated. But to my purpose. In this recess, marked by the armorial bearings, lies buried a treasure, and it is in order to remove it that I have undertaken my present journey."

"A treasure!" echoed I, in astonishment.

"Yes," replied the Monk, "an inestimable treasure, for those who know how to use it rightly."

I own my ears did tingle a little at the word treasure, and that a handsome tilbury, with a neat groom in blue and scarlet livery, having a smart cockade on his glazed hat, seemed as it were to glide across the room before my eyes, while a voice, as of a crier, pronounced in my ear, "Captain Clutterbuck's tilbury—drive up." But I resisted the devil, and he fled from me.

"I believe," said I, "all hidden treasure

belongs either to the king or the lord of the soil; and as I have served his majesty, I cannot concern myself in any adventure which may have an end in the Court of Exchequer."

"The treasure I seek," said the stranger smiling, "will not be envied by princes or nobles,—it is simply the heart of an upright man."

"Ah! I understand you," I answered, "some relique, forgotten in the confusion of the Reformation. I know the value which men of your persuasion put upon the bodies and limbs of saints. I have seen the three Kings of Cologne."

"The reliques which I seek, however," said the Benedictine, "are not precisely of that nature. The excellent relative whom I have already mentioned, amused his leisure hours with putting into form the traditions of his family, particularly some remarkable circumstances which took place about the first breaking out of the schism of the Church in Scotland. He became so much

interested in his own labours, that at length he resolved that the heart of one individual, the hero of his tale, should rest no longer in a land of heresy, now deserted by all his kindred. As he knew where it was deposited, he formed the resolution to visit his native country for the purpose of recovering this valued relique. But age, and at length disease, interfered with his resolution, and it was on his death-bed that he charged me to undertake the task in his stead The various important events which have crowded upon each other, our ruin and our exile, have for many years obliged me to postpone this delegated duty. Why, indeed, transfer the reliques of a holy and worthy man to a country, where religion and virtue are become the mockery of the scorner! I have now a home, which I trust may be permanent, if any thing in this earth can be termed so. Thither will I transport the heart of the good father, and beside the shrine which it shall occupy, I will construct my own grave."

"He must, indeed, have been an excellent man," replied I, "whose memory, at so distant a period, calls forth such strong marks of regard."

"He was, as you justly term him," said the ecclesiastic, "indeed excellent—excellent in his life and doctrine—excellent, above all, in his self-denied and disinterested sacrifice of all that life holds dear, to principle and to friendship. But you shall read his history. I shall be happy at once to gratify your curiosity, and to shew my sense of your kindness, if you will have the goodness to procure me the means of accomplishing my object."

I replied to the Benedictine, that, as the rubbish amongst which he proposed to search was no part of the ordinary burial-ground, and as I was on the best terms with the sexton, I had little doubt that I could procure him the means of executing his pious purpose.

With this promise, we parted for the night; and on the ensuing morning I made

it my business to see the sexton, who, for a small gratuity, readily granted permission of search, on condition, however, that he should be present himself, to see that the stranger removed nothing of intrinsic value.

"To banes, and sculls, and hearts, if he can find ony, he shall be welcome," said this guardian of the ruined Monastery, "there's plenty a' about, an' he's curious of them; but if there be ony picts (meaning perhaps pyx) or chalishes, or the like of such Popish veshells of gold and silver, de'il hae me an I conneeve at their being removed."

The sexton also stipulated, that our researches should take place at night, being unwilling to excite observation, or give rise to scandal.

My new acquaintance and I spent the day as became lovers of hoar antiquity. We visited every corner of these magnificent ruins again and again during the forenoon; and, having made a comfortable dinner at David's, we walked in the afternoon to such places in the neighbourhood as an-

cient tradition or modern conjecture had rendered mark-worthy. Night found us in the interior of the ruins, attended by the sexton, who carried a dark lantern, and stumbling alternately over the graves of the dead, and the fragments of that architecture, "which they doubtless trusted would have canopied their bones till doomsday."

I am by no means particularly superstitious, and yet there was that in the present service which I did not very much like. There was something awful in the resolution of disturbing, at such an hour and in such a place, the still, mute sanctity of the grave. My companions were free from this impression—the stranger from his energetic desire to execute the purpose for which he came—and the sexton, from habitual indifference. They soon stood in the aisle, which, by the account of the stranger, contained the bones of the family of Glendinning, and were busily employed in removing the rubbish from a corner which the stranger pointed out. If a half-pay Cap-

tain could have represented an ancient Border-knight, or an ex-Benedictine of the nineteenth century a wizard monk of the sixteenth, we might have aptly enough personified the search after Michael Scott's lamp and book of magic power. But the sexton would have been *de trop* in the groupe.

Ere the stranger, assisted by the sexton in his task, had been long at work, they came to some hewn stones, which seemed to have made part of a small shrine, though now displaced and destroyed.

"Let us remove these with caution, my friend," said the stranger, "lest we injure that which I come to seek."

"They are prime stanes," said the sexton, "picked free every ane of them;—warse than the best wad never serve the Monks, I'se warrant."

A minute after he had made this observation, he exclaimed, "I hae fund something now that stands again the spade, as if it were neither earth nor stane"

The stranger stooped eagerly to assist him.

"Na, na, hail o' my ain," said the sexton; "nae halves or quarters;"—and he lifted from amongst the ruins a small leaden box.

"You will be disappointed, my friend," said the Benedictine, "if you expect any thing there but the mouldering dust of a human heart, closed in an inner case of porphyry."

I interposed as a neutral party, and taking the box from the sexton, reminded him that if there were treasure concealed in it, still it could not become the property of the finder. I then proposed, that as the place was too dark to examine the contents of the leaden casket, we should adjourn to David's, where we might have the advantage of light and fire while carrying on our investigation. The stranger requested us to go before, assuring us that he would follow in a few minutes.

I fancy that old Mattocks suspected these

few minutes might be employed in effecting further discoveries amongst the tombs, for he glided back through a side-aisle to watch the Benedictine's motions, but presently returned, and told me in a whisper, that "the gentleman was on his knees amang the cauld stanes, praying like ony saunt."

I stole back, and beheld the old man actually employed as Mattocks had informed me. The language seemed to be Latin; and as the whispered, yet solemn accent, glided away through the ruined aisles, I could not help reflecting how long it was since they had heard the forms of that religion, for the exercise of which they had been reared at such cost of time, taste, labour, and expence. "Come away, come away," said I; "let us leave him to himself, Mattocks, this is no business of ours."

"My certes, no, Captain," said Mattocks; "ne'ertheless, it winna be amiss to keep an e'e on him. My father, rest his saul, was a horse-couper, and used to say he never was

cheated in a naig in his life; saving by a west-country whig frae Kilmarnock, that said a grace ower a dram o' whisky. But this gentleman will be a Roman, I'se warrant."

"You are perfectly right in that, Saunders," said I.

"Ay, I hae seen twa or three of their priests that were chaced ower here some score o' years syne. They just danced like mad when they looked on the friars' heads, and the nuns' heads, in the cloister yonder; they took to them like auld acquaintance like. Od, he is not stirring yet, mair than he were a through-stane!* I never kenn'd a Roman, to say kenn'd him, but ane—mair by token, he was the only ane in the town to ken, and that was auld Jock of the Pend. It wad hae been lang ere ye fand Jock praying in the Abbey in a thick night wi' his knees on a cauld stane. Jock liket a kirk wi' a chimley in't. Mony a merry

* A tombstone.

ploy I hae had wi' him down at the inn yonder; and when he died decently, I wad hae earded him; but, or I gat his grave weel howkit, some of the quality, that were o' his ain unhappy persuasion, had the corpse whirried away up the water, and buried him after their ain pleasure doubtless—they kenn'd best. I wad hae made nae great charge. I wadna hae excised Johnie, dead or alive.—Stay, see the strange gentleman is coming."

"Hold the lantern, to assist him, Mattocks," said I.—"This is rough walking, sir."

"Yes," replied the Benedictine; "I may say with a poet, who is doubtless familiar to you"——

"I should be surprised if he were," thought I internally.

The stranger continued:

"Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves."

"We are now clear of the churchyard."

said I, "and have but a short walk to David's, where I hope we shall find a cheerful fire to enliven us after our night's work."

We entered, accordingly, the little parlour, into which Mattocks was also about to push himself with sufficient effrontery, when David, with a most astounding oath, expelled him by head and shoulders, d——ning his curiosity, that would not let gentlemen be private in their own inn. Apparently mine host considered his own presence as no intrusion, for he crowded up to the table on which I had laid down the leaden box. It was frail and wasted, as might be guessed, from having lain so many years in the ground. On opening it, we found deposited within, a case made of porphyry, as the stranger had announced to us.

"I fancy," he said, "gentlemen, your curiosity will not be satisfied, perhaps I should say that your suspicions will not be removed, unless I undo this casket; yet it only contains the mouldering remains of a heart once the seat of the noblest thoughts."

He undid the box with great caution; but the shrivelled substance which it contained bore now no resemblance to what it might once have been, the means used to preserve it having been apparently unequal to preserve its shape and colour, although they were adequate to prevent its total decay. We were quite satisfied, notwithstanding, that it was, what the stranger asserted, the remains of a human heart; and David readily promised his influence in the village, which was almost co-ordinate with that of the Baillie himself, to silence all idle rumours. He was, moreover, pleased to favour us with his company to supper; and having taken the lion's share of two bottles of sherry, he not only sanctioned with his plenary authority the stranger's removal of the heart, but, I believe, would have authorized the removal of the Abbey itself, but that it happens considerably to advantage the worthy publican's own custom.

The object of the Benedictine's visit to the land of his forefathers being now ac-

complished, he announced his intention of departing early in the ensuing day; but requested my company to breakfast with him before his departure. I came accordingly, and when we had finished our morning's meal, the priest took me apart, and, pulling from his pocket a large bundle of papers, he put them into my hands. "These," said he, "Captain Clutterbuck, are genuine Memoirs of the sixteenth century, and exhibit in a singular, and, as I think, an interesting point of view, the manners of that period. I am induced to believe that their publication will not be an unacceptable present to the British public; and I willingly make over to you any profit that may accrue from such a transaction."

I stared a little at this annunciation, and observed, that the hand seemed too modern for the date he assigned to the manuscript.

"Do not mistake me, sir," said the Benedictine; "I did not mean to say the Memoirs were written in the sixteenth century, but only, that they were compiled from au-

thentic materials of that period, but written in the taste and language of the present day. My uncle commenced this book; and I, partly to improve my habit of English composition, partly to divert melancholy thoughts, amused my leisure hours with continuing and concluding it. You will see the period of the story where my uncle leaves off his narrative, and I commence mine. In fact, they relate in a great measure to different persons, as well as to a different period."

Retaining the papers in my hand, I proceeded to state to him my doubts, whether, as a good Protestant, I could undertake or superintend a publication written probably in the spirit of Popery.

"You will find," he said, "no matter of controversy in these sheets, nor any sentiments stated, with which, I trust, the good in all persuasions will not be willing to join. I remembered I was writing for a land unhappily divided from the Catholic faith; and I have taken care to say nothing which,

justly interpreted, could give ground for accusing me of partiality. But if, upon collating my narrative with the proofs to which I refer you—for you will find copies of many of the original papers in that parcel—you are of opinion that I have been partial to my own faith, I freely give you leave to correct my errors in that respect. I own, however, I am not conscious of this defect, and have rather to fear that the Catholics may be of opinion, that I have mentioned circumstances respecting the decay of discipline which preceded, and partly occasioned, the great schism, called by you the Reformation, over which I ought to have drawn a veil. And indeed, this is one reason why I chuse the papers should appear in a foreign land, and pass to the press through the hands of a stranger."

To this I had nothing to reply, unless to object my own incompetency to the task the good father was desirous to impose upon me. On this subject he was pleased to say more, I fear, than his knowledge of me fully

warranted—more, at any rate, than my modesty will permit me to record. At length he ended, with advising me, if I continued to feel the diffidence which I stated, to apply to some veteran of literature, whose experience might supply my deficiencies. Upon these terms we parted, with mutual expressions of regard, and I have never since heard of him.

After several attempts to peruse the quires of paper thus singularly conferred on me, in which I was interrupted by the most inexplicable fits of yawning, I at length, in a sort of despair, communicated them to our village club, from whom they found a more favourable reception than the unlucky conformation of my nerves had been able to afford them. They unanimously pronounced the work to be exceedingly good, and assured me I would be guilty of the greatest possible injury to our flourishing village, if I should suppress what threw such an interesting and radiant light

upon the history of the ancient Monastery of Saint Mary.

At length, by dint of listening to their opinion, I became dubious of my own; and indeed, when I heard passages read forth by the sonorous voice of our worthy pastor, I was scarce more tired than I have felt myself at some of his own sermons. Such, and so great is the difference betwixt reading a thing one's self, making toilsome way through all the difficulties of manuscript, and, as the man says in the play, "having the same read to you,"—it is positively like being wafted over a creek in a boat, or wading through it on your feet, with the mud up to your knees. Still, however, there remained the great difficulty of finding some one who could act as editor, corrector at once of the press and of the language, which, according to the schoolmaster, was absolutely necessary.

Since the trees walked forth to chuse themselves a king, never was an honour so bandied about. The parson would not leave the

quiet of his chimney-corner—the bailie pleaded the dignity of his situation, and the approach of the great annual fair, as reasons against going to Edinburgh to make arrangements for printing the Benedictine's Manuscript. The schoolmaster alone seemed of malleable stuff; and, desirous perhaps of emulating the fame of Jedediah Cleishbotham, evinced a wish to undertake this momentous commission. But a remonstrance from three opulent farmers, whose sons he had at bed, board, and schooling, for twenty pounds per annum a-head, came like a frost over the blossoms of his literary ambition, and he was compelled to decline the service.

In these circumstances, sir, I apply to you, by the advice of our little council of war, nothing doubting you will not be disinclined to take the duty upon you, as it is much connected with that in which you have distinguished yourself. What I request is, that you will review, or rather revise and correct the enclosed packet, and prepare it for the press, by such alterations,

additions, and curtailments, as you think necessary. Forgive my hinting to you, that the deepest well may be exhausted,—the best corps of grenadiers, as our old general of brigade expressed himself, may be *used up*. A few hints can do you no harm; and, for the prize-money, let the battle be first won, and it shall be parted at the drum-head. I hope you will take nothing amiss that I have said. I am a plain soldier, and little accustomed to compliments. I may add, that I should be well contented to march in the front with you—that is, to put my name with your's on the title-page. I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your unknown humble Servant,

Cuthbert Clutterbuck.

Village of Kennaquhair,
—— of April 18——

For the Author of "Waverley," &c.
care of Mr John Ballantyne,
Hanover Street, Edinburgh.

ANSWER

BY

"THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY,"

TO THE

FOREGOING LETTER

FROM

CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK.

Dear Captain,

Do not admire, that, notwithstanding the distance and ceremony of your address, I return an answer in the terms of familiarity. The truth is, your origin and native country are better known to me than even to yourself. You derive your respectable parentage, if I am not greatly mistaken, from a land which has afforded much pleasure, as well as profit, to those who have traded to it successfully. I mean that part of the *terra incognita* which is called the

province of Utopia. Its productions, though censured by many (and some who use tea and tobacco without scruple) as idle and unsubstantial luxuries, have nevertheless, like many other luxuries, a general acceptation, and are secretly enjoyed even by those who express the greatest scorn and dislike of them in public. The dram-drinker is often the first so be shocked at the smell of spirits—it is usual to hear old maiden-ladies declaim against scandal—the private book-cases of some grave-seeming men would not brook decent eyes—and many, I say not of the wise and learned, but of those most anxious to seem such, when the spring-lock of their library is drawn, their velvet cap pulled over their ears, their steps insinuated into their turkey slippers, are to be found, were their retreats suddenly intruded upon, busily engaged with the last new novel.

I have said, the truly wise and learned disdain these shifts, and will open the said novel as openly as they would the lid of

their snuff-box. I will only quote one instance, though I know a hundred. Did you know the celebrated Watt of Birmingham, Captain Clutterbuck? I believe not, though, from what I am about to state, he would not have failed to have sought an acquaintance with you. It was only once my fortune to meet him, whether in body or in spirit it matters not. There were assembled about half a score of our Northern Lights, who had got amongst them, Heaven knows how, a well-known character of your country, Jedediah Cleishbotham. This worthy person, having come to Edinburgh during the Christmas vacation, had become a sort of lion in the place, and was led in leash from house to house along with the guissards, the stone-eater, and other amusements of the season, which "exhibit their unparalleled feats to private family-parties, if required." Amidst this company stood Mr Watt, the man whose genius discovered the means of multiplying our national resources to a degree perhaps even beyond his own stupen-

douspowers of calculation and combination; bringing the treasures of the abyss to the summit of the earth—giving the feeble arm of man the momentum of an Afrite—commanding manufactures to arise, as the rod of the prophet produced water, in the desert, affording the means of dispensing with that time and tide which wait for no man, and of sailing without that wind which defied the commands and threats of Xerxes himself.* This potent commander of the elements—this abridger of time and space—this magician, whose cloudy machinery has produced a change on the world, the effects of which, extraordinary as they are, are perhaps only now beginning to be felt—was

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* Note by Captain Clutterbuck.

Probably the ingenious author alludes to the national adage:

The king said sail,
But the wind said no.

Our schoolmaster (who is also a land-surveyor) thinks this whole passage refers to Mr Watt's improvements on the steam-engine.

not only the most profound man of science, the most successful combiner of powers and calculator of numbers, as adapted to practical purposes,—was not only one of the most generally well-informed,—but one of the best and kindest of human beings.—

There he stood, surrounded by the little band I have mentioned of Northern literati, men not less tenacious, generally speaking, of their own fame and their own opinions, than the national regiments are supposed to be jealous of the high character which they have won upon service. Methinks I yet see and hear what I shall never see or hear again. In his eighty-fifth year, the alert, kind, benevolent old man, had his attention at every one's question, his information at every one's command. His talents and fancy overflowed on every subject. One gentleman was a deep philologist,—he talked with him on the origin of the alphabet as if he had been coeval with Cadmus; another a celebrated critic,—you would have said the old man had studied

political economy and belles-lettres all his life,—of science it is unnecessary to speak, it was his own distinguished walk. And yet, Captain Clutterbuck, when he spoke with your countryman Jedediah Cleishbotham, you would have sworn he had been coeval with Claverse and Burley, with the persecutors and persecuted, and could number every shot the dragoons had fired at the fugitive covenanters. In fact, we discovered that no novel of the least celebrity escaped his perusal, and that the gifted man of science was as much addicted to the productions of your native country, (the land of Utopia aforesaid;) in other words, as shameless and obstinate a peruser of novels as if he had been a very milliner's apprentice of eighteen. I know little apology for troubling you with these things, excepting the desire to commemorate a delightful evening, and a wish to encourage you to shake off that modest diffidence which makes you afraid of being supposed connected with the fairy-land of delusive fiction. I will requite

your tag of verse, from Horace himself, with a paraphrase for your own use, my dear Captain, and for that of your country club, excepting in reverence the clergyman and schoolmaster:—

Ne sit ancillæ tibi amor pudori, &c.

Take thou no scorn,
Of fiction born,
Fair fiction's muse to woo;
Old Homer's theme
Was but a dream,
Himself a fiction too.

Having told you your country, I must next, my dear Captain Clutterbuck, make free to mention to you your own immediate descent. You are not to suppose your land of prodigies so little known to us as your careful concealment of your origin would seem to imply. But you have it in common with many of your country, studiously and anxiously to hide your connection with it. There is this difference, indeed, betwixt your countrymen and those

of our more material world, that many of the most estimable of yours, such as an old Highland gentleman called Ossian, a monk of Bristol called Rowley, and others, are inclined to pass themselves as denizens of the land of reality, whereas most of our fellow-citizens who deny their country are such as that country would be very willing to disclaim. The especial circumstances you mention relating to your life and services, impose not upon us. We know the versatility of the unsubstantial species to which you belong permits them to assume all manner of disguises; we have seen them apparelled in the caftan of a Persian, and the silken robe of a Chinese,* and are prepared to suspect their real character under every disguise. But how can we be ignorant of your country and manners, or deceived by the evasions of its inhabitants, when the voyages of discovery which have been made

* See "The Persian Letters," and "The Citizen of the World."

to it rival in number those recorded by Purchas or by Hackluyt?* And to shew the skill and perseverance of your navigators and travellers, we have only to name Sindbad, Aboulfouaris, and Robinson Crusoe. These were the men for discoveries. Could we have sent Captain Greenland to look out for the north-west passage, or Peter Wilkins to examine Baffin's Bay, what discoveries might we not have expected! But there are feats, and these both numerous and extraordinary, performed by the inhabitants of your country, which we read without once attempting to emulate.

I wander from my purpose, which was to assure you, that I know you as well as the mother who did *not* bear you, for MacDuff's peculiarity sticks to your whole race. You are not born of woman, unless, indeed, in that figurative sense, in which the celebrated Maria Edgeworth may be termed mother of the finest family in England.

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* See "Les Voyages Imaginaires."

You belong, sir, to the Editors of the land of Utopia, a sort of persons for whom I have the highest esteem. How is it possible it should be otherwise, when you reckon among your corporation the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli, the short-faced president of the Spectator's club, poor Ben Silton, and many others, who have acted as gentlemen ushers to works which have chased our heaviest, and added wings to our lightest hours.

What I have remarked as peculiar to Editors of the class in which I venture to enrol you, is the happy combination of fortuitous circumstances which usually put you in possession of the works which you have the goodness to bring into public notice. One walks on the sea-shore, and a wave casts on land a small cylindrical trunk or casket, containing a manuscript much damaged with sea-water, which is with difficulty decyphered, and so forth.* Another steps into a chandler's shop to purchase a pound

* See the History of Automathes.

of butter, and behold! the waste-paper on which it is laid is the manuscript of a cabalist.* A third is so fortunate as to obtain from a woman who lets lodgings the curious contents of an antique bureau, the property of a deceased lodger.† All these are certainly possible occurrences; but I know not how, they seldom occur to any Editors save those of your country. At least I can answer for myself, that in my solitary walks by the sea, I never saw it cast ashore any thing but dulse and tangle, and now and then a deceased star-fish; my landlady never presented me with any manuscript save her cursed bill; and the most interesting of my discoveries in the way of waste-paper, was finding a favourite passage of one of my own novels wrapt round an ounce of snuff. No, Captain, the funds from which I have drawn my power of amusing the public, have been bought otherwise

* Adventures of a Guinea.

† Adventures of an Atom.

than by fortuitous adventure. I have buried myself in libraries, to extract from the nonsense of ancient days new nonsense of my own. I have turned over volumes, which, from the pot-hooks I was obliged to decypher, might have been the cabalistic manuscripts of Cornelius Agrippa, although I never saw "the door open and the devil come in."* But all the domestic inhabitants of the libraries were disturbed by the vehemence of my studies;—

> From my research the boldest spider fled,
> And moths, retreating, trembled as I read.

From this learned sepulchre I emerged like the Magician in the Persian Tales from his twelvemonth's residence in the mountain, not like him to soar over the heads of the multitude, but to mingle in their crowd, and to elbow amongst the throng, making my way from the highest society to

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* See Southey's Ballad on the young Man who read in a Conjuror's Books.

the lowest, undergoing the scorn, or, what is harder to brook, the patronizing condescension of the one, and enduring the vulgar familiarity of the other,—and all, you will say, for what?—to collect materials for one of those manuscripts with which mere chance so often accommodates your countrymen; in other words, to write a successful novel.—"O, Athenians, how hard to labour to deserve your praise!"

I might stop here, my dear Clutterbuck; it would have a touching effect, and the air of proper deference to our dear Public. But I will not be false with you,—(though falsehood is—excuse the observation—the current coin of your country) the truth is, I have studied and lived for the purpose of gratifying my own curiosity, and passing away my own time; and though the result has been, that, in one shape or other, I have been frequently before the Public, perhaps more frequently than prudence warranted, yet I cannot claim from them the favour due to those who have dedicated their ease

and leisure to the improvement and entertainment of others.

Having communicated thus freely with you, my dear Captain, it follows, of course, that I will gratefully accept of your communication, which, as your Benedictine observed, divides itself both by subject, manner, and age, into two parts. But I am sorry I cannot gratify your literary ambition, by suffering your name to appear upon the title-page; and I will candidly tell you the reason.

The Editors of your country are of such a soft and passive disposition, that they have frequently done themselves great disgrace by giving up the coadjutors who first brought them into public notice and public favour, and suffering their names to be used by those quacks and impostors who live upon the ideas of others. Thus I shame to tell how the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli was induced by one Juan Avellaneda to play the Turk with the ingenious Miguel Cervantes, and to publish a second

part of the adventures of his hero the renowned Don Quixote, without the knowledge or co-operation of his principal aforesaid. It is true, the Arabian sage returned to his allegiance, and thereafter composed a genuine continuation of the Knight of La Mancha, in which the said Avellaneda of Tordesillas is severely chastised. For in this you pseudo-editors resemble the juggler's disciplined ape, to which a sly old Scotsman likened James I., " if you have Jackoo in your hand, you can make him bite me; if I have Jackoo in my hand, I can make him bite you." Yet, notwithstanding the *amende honourable* thus made by Cid Hamet Benengeli, his temporary defection did not the less occasion the decease of the ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote, if he can be said to die, whose memory is immortal. Cervantes put him to death, lest he should again fall into bad hands. Awful, yet just consequence of Cid Hamet's defection!

To quote a more modern and much less important instance. I am sorry to observe my old acquaintance Jedediah Cleishbo-

than has misbehaved himself so far as to desert his original patron, and set up for himself. I am afraid the poor pedagogue will take little by his new allies, unless the pleasure of entertaining the public, and, for aught I know, the gentlemen of the long robe, with disputes about his identity.* Observe, therefore, Captain Clutterbuck, that, wise by these great examples, I receive you as a partner, but a sleeping partner only. As I give you no title to employ or use the firm of the copartnery we are about to form, I will announce my property in my title-page, and put my own mark on my own chattels, which the attorney tells me will be a crime to coun-

* I am since more correctly informed, that Mr Cleishbotham died some months since at Gandercleugh, and that the person assuming his name is an impostor. The real Jedediah made a most christian and edifying end; and, as I am credibly informed, having sent for a Cameronian clergyman when he was *in extremis*, was so fortunate as to convince the good man, that, after all, he had no wish to bring down on the scattered remnant of Mountain folks, " the bonnets of Bonny Dundee." Hard that the speculators in print and paper will not allow a good man to rest quiet in his grave!!!

terfeit, as much as it would to imitate the autograph of any other empiric—a crime amounting, as advertisements upon little vials assure us, to nothing short of felony. If, therefore, my dear friend, your name should hereafter appear in any title page without mine, readers will know what to think of you. I scorn to use either arguments or threats; but you cannot but be sensible, that, as you owe your literary existence to me on the one hand, so, on the other, your very all is at my disposal. I can at pleasure cut off your annuity, strike your name from the half-pay establishment, nay actually put you to death, without being answerable to any one. These are plain words to a gentleman who has served through the whole war; but, I am aware, you will take nothing amiss at my hands.

And now, my good sir, let us address ourselves to our task, and arrange as we best can the manuscript of your Benedictine, so as to suit the taste of this critical age. You will find I have made very liberal use of his permission, to alter whatever

seemed too favourable to the Church of Rome, which I abominate, were it but for her fasts and penance.

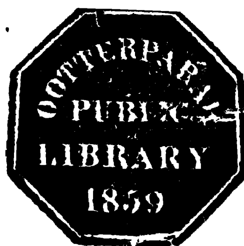
Our reader is doubtless impatient, and we must own, with John Bunyan,

> We have too long detained him in the porch,
> And kept him from the sunshine with a torch.

Adieu, therefore, my dear Captain—remember me respectfully to the parson, the schoolmaster, and the baillie, and all friends of the happy club in the village of Kennaquhair. I have never seen, and never will see, one of their faces; and notwithstanding, I believe that as yet I am better acquainted with them than any man who lives.—I will soon introduce you to my jocund friend Mr John Ballantyne of Trinity-Grove, whom you will find warm from his match at single-stick with a brother publisher. Peace to their differences! It is a wrathful trade, and the *irritable genus* comprehends the bookselling as well as the book-writing species.—Once more adieu!

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY

THE MONASTERY.



THE MONASTERY.

CHAPTER I.

O aye! the Monks, the Monks they did the mischief,
Theirs all the grossness, all the superstition
Of a most gross and superstitious age—
May He be praised that sent the healthful tempest,
And scattered all these pestilential vapours!
But that we owed them *all* to yonder Harlot
Throned on the seven hills with her cup of gold,
I will as soon believe, with kind Sir Roger,
That old Moll White took wing with cat and broomstick,
And raised the last night's thunder.

Old Play.

The village described in the Benedictine's manuscript by the name of Kennaquhair, bears the same Celtic termination which occurs in Traquhair, Caquhair, and other compounds. The learned Chalmers derives this word Quhair, from the winding course of the stream; a definition which

coincides in a remarkable degree with the serpentine turns of the river Tweed near the village of which we speak. It has been long famous for the splendid Monastery of Saint Mary, founded by David the First of Scotland, in whose reign and in the same county were formed the no less splendid establishments of Melrose, Jedburgh, and Kelso. The donations of land with which the King endowed these wealthy fraternities procured him from the Monkish historians the epithet of Saint, and from one of his impoverished descendants the splenetic censure, "that he had been a sore saint for the Crown."

It seems probable notwithstanding, that David, who was a wise as well as a pious monarch, was not moved solely by religious motives to those great acts of munificence to the church, but annexed political views to his pious generosity. His possessions in Northumberland and Cumberland became precarious after the loss of the Battle of the Standard; and since the comparatively fertile valley of Teviotdale was likely to be-

come the frontier of his kingdom, it is probable he wished to secure at least a part of these valuable possessions by placing them in the hands of the Monks, whose property was for a long time respected, even amidst the rage of a frontier war. In this manner alone had the King some chance of insuring protection and security to the cultivators of the soil; and, in fact, for several ages the possessions of these Abbies were each a sort of Goshen, enjoying the calm light of peace and immunity, while the rest of the country, occupied by wild clans and marauding barons, was one dark scene of confusion, blood, and unremitted outrage.

But these immunities did not continue down to the union of the crowns. Long before that period the wars betwixt England and Scotland had lost their original character of international hostilities, and had become on the part of the English a war of subjugation, on that of the Scots a desperate and infuriated defence of their liberties. This introduced on both sides a

degree of fury and animosity unknown to the earlier period of their history; and as religious scruples soon gave way to national hatred spurred by a love of plunder, the patrimony of the Church was no longer sacred from incursions on either side. Still, however, the tenants and vassals of the great Abbies had many advantages over those of the lay barons, who were harassed by constant military duty, until they became desperate, and lost all relish for the arts of peace. The vassals of the church, on the other hand, were only liable to be called to arms on general occasions, and at other times were permitted in comparative quiet to possess their farms and *feus*.*

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* Small possessions conferred upon vassals and their heirs, held for a small quit-rent, or a moderate proportion of the produce. This was a favourite manner, by which the churchmen peopled the patrimony of their convents; and many descendants of such *feuars*, as they are called, are still to be found in possession of their family inheritances in the neighbourhood of the great Monasteries of Scotland.

They of course exhibited superior skill in every thing that related to the cultivation of the soil, and were therefore both wealthier and better informed than the military retainers of the restless chiefs and nobles in their neighbourhood.

The residence of these church vassals was usually in a small village or hamlet, where, for the sake of mutual aid and protection, some thirty or forty families dwelt together. This was called the Town, and the land belonging to the various families by whom the Town was inhabited, was called the Township. They usually possessed the land in common, though in various proportions, according to their several grants. The part of the Township properly arable, and kept as such continually under the plough, was called *in-field*. Here the use of quantities of manure supplied in some degree the exhaustion of the soil, and the feuars raised tolerable oats and bear,* usu-

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* Or, bigg, a coarse kind of barley.

ally sowed on alternate ridges, on which the labour of the whole community was bestowed without distinction, the produce being divided after harvest, agreeably to their respective interests.

There was, besides, *out-field* land, from which it was thought possible to extract a crop now and then, after which it was abandoned to the "skiey influences," until the exhausted powers of vegetation were restored. These out-field spots were selected by any feuar at his own choice, amongst the sheep-walks and hills which were always annexed to the Township, to serve as pasturage to the community. The trouble of cultivating these patches of out-field, and the precarious chance that the crop would pay the labour, were considered as giving a right to any feuar, who chose to undertake the adventure, to the produce which might result from it.

There remained the pasturage of extensive moors, where the vallies often afforded good grass, and upon which the whole cattle belonging to the community

fed indiscriminately during the summer, under the charge of the Town-herd, who regularly drove them out to pasture in the morning, and brought them back at night, without which precaution they would have fallen a speedy prey to some of the Snatchers in the neighbourhood. These are things to make modern agriculturists hold up their hands and stare; but the same mode of cultivation is not yet entirely in desuetude in some distant parts of North-Britain, and may be witnessed in full force and exercise in the Zetland Archipelago.

The habitations of the church-feuars were not less primitive than their agriculture. In each small village or Town were several small towers, having battlements projecting over the side-walls, and usually an advanced angle or two with shot-holes for flanking the door-way, which was always defended by a strong door of oak, studded with nails, and often by an exterior grated door of iron. These small peel-houses were ordinarily inhabited by the principal feuars

and their families; but, upon the alarm of approaching danger, the whole inhabitants thronged from their own miserable cottages, which were situated around, to garrison these points of defence. It was then no easy matter for a hostile party to penetrate into the village, for the men were habituated to the use of bows and fire-arms, and the towers being generally so placed, that the discharge from one crossed that of another, it was impossible to assault any of them individually.

The interior of these houses were usually sufficiently wretched, for it would have been folly to have furnished them in a manner which could excite the avarice of their loose neighbours. Yet the families themselves exhibited in their appearance a degree of comfort, information, and independence, which could hardly have been expected. Their in-field supplied them with bread and home-brewed ale, their herds and flocks with beef and mutton, (the extravagance of killing lambs or calves was

never thought of.) Each family killed a mart, or fat bullock, in November, which was salted up for winter use, to which the good wife could, upon great occasions, add a dish of pigeons or a fat capon—the ill-cultivated garden afforded "lang-cale,"—and the river gave salmon to relish them during the season of lent.

Of fuel they had plenty, for the bogs afforded turf; and the remains of the abused woods continued to give them logs for burning, as well as timber for the usual domestic purposes. In addition to these comforts, the good-man would now and then sally forth to the greenwood, and mark down a buck of season with his gun or his cross-bow; and the Father Confessor seldom refused him absolution for the trespass, if duly invited to take his share of the smoking haunch. Some, yet bolder, made, either with their own domestics, or by associating themselves with the moss-troopers, in the language of shepherds, "a start and owerloup;" and the golden orna-

ments and silken head-gear worn by the females of one or two families of note, were invidiously traced by their neighbours to such successful excursions. This, however, was a more inexpiable crime in the eyes of the Abbot and Community of Saint Mary's, than the borrowing one of the "gude king's deer;" and they failed not to discountenance and punish, by every means in their power, offences which were sure to lead to severe retaliation upon the property of the church, and which tended to alter the character of their peaceful vassalage.

As for the information possessed by those dependants of the Abbacies, they might have been truly said to be better fed than taught, even though their feeding had been worse than it was. Still, however, they enjoyed opportunities of knowledge from which others were excluded. The Monks were in general well acquainted with their vassals and tenants, and familiar in the families of the better class among them, where they were sure to be received with the respect

due to their double character of spiritual father and secular landlord. Thus it often happened, when a boy displayed talents and inclination for study, one of the brethren, with a view to his being bred to the church, or out of good nature, or in order to pass away his own idle time if he had no better motive, initiated him into the mysteries of reading and writing, and imparted to him such other knowledge as he himself possessed. And the heads of these allied families, having more time for reflection, and more skill, as well as stronger motives for improving their small properties, bore amongst their neighbours the character of shrewd, intelligent men, who claimed respect on account of their comparative wealth, even while they were despised for a less warlike and enterprizing turn than the other Borderers. They lived as much as they well could amongst themselves, avoiding the company of others, and dreading nothing more than to be involved in the deadly feuds and ceaseless contentions of the secular landholders.

Such was the general picture of these communities. During the fatal wars in the commencement of Queen Mary's reign, they had suffered dreadfully by the hostile invasions. For the English, now a Protestant people, were so far from sparing the church-lands, that they forayed them with more unrelenting severity than even the possessions of the laity. But the peace of 1550 had restored some degree of tranquillity to those distracted and harassed regions, and matters began again gradually to settle upon the former footing. The Monks repaired their ravaged shrines—the feuar again roofed his small fortalice which the enemy had ruined—the poor labourer rebuilt his cottage,—an easy task, where a few sods, stones, and a few pieces of wood from the next copse, furnished all the materials necessary. The cattle, lastly, were driven out of the wastes and thickets in which the remnant of them had been secreted; and the mighty bull moved at the head of his seraglio and their followers, to

take possession of their wonted pastures. There ensued peace and quiet, the state of the age and nation considered, to the Monastery of Saint Mary, and its dependencies, for several tranquil years.

CHAPTER II.

In yon lone vale his early youth was bred,
Not solitary then—the bugle-horn
Of fell Alecto often waked its windings,
From where the brook joins the majestic river,
To the wild northern bog, the curlieu's haunt,
Where oozes forth its first and feeble streamlet.

Old Play.

We have said, that most of the feuars dwelt in the village belonging to their townships. This was not, however, universally the case. A lonely tower, to which the reader must now be introduced, was at least one exception to the general rule.

It was of small dimensions, yet larger than those which occurred in the village, as intimating that, in case of assault, the proprietor would have to rely upon his own unassisted strength. Two or three miserable huts, at the foot of the fortalice, held the bondsmen and tenants of the feuar. The site was a

beautiful green knoll, which started up suddenly in the very throat of a wild and narrow glen, and which, being surrounded, save on one side, by the winding of a small stream, afforded a position of considerable strength.

But the great security of Glendearg, for so the place was called, lay in its secluded and hidden situation. To come at the Tower, it was necessary to travel three miles up the glen, crossing about twenty times the little stream which, winding through the narrow valley, encountered at every hundred yards the opposition of a rock or precipitous bank on the one side, which altered its direction, and caused it to shoot off in an oblique direction to the other. The hills which ascend on each side of this glen are very steep, and rise boldly over the stream, which is thus imprisoned within their barriers. The sides of the glen are impracticable for horse, and are only to be traversed by means of the sheep paths which lie along their sides. It would be

difficult to suppose that a road so hopeless and so difficult could lead to any habitation more important than the summer shealing of a shepherd.

Yet the glen, though lonely and difficult of access and sterile, was not then absolutely void of beauty. The turf which occupied the little plain ground on the sides of the stream, was as close and verdant as if it had occupied the scythes of a hundred gardeners once a-fortnight; and it was garnished with an embroidery of daisies and wild flowers, which the scythes would certainly have destroyed. The little brook, now confined betwixt closer limits, now left at large to chuse its course through the narrow valley, danced carelessly on from stream to pool, light and unturbid, as that better class of spirits who pass their way through life, yielding to insurmountable obstacles, but as far from being subdued by them as the sailor who meets by chance with an unfavourable wind, and shapes his course so as to be driven back as little as possible.

The mountains, as they would have been called in England, *Scotticé* the deep *braes*, rose abruptly over the little glen, here presenting the grey face of a rock, from which the turf had been peeled by the torrents, and there displaying little patches of wood and copse, which had escaped the waste of the cattle and the sheep and the feuars, and which, feathering naturally up the beds of empty torrents, or occupying the concave recesses of the bank, gave at once beauty and variety to the landscape. Above these scattered woods rose the hill, in barren, but purple majesty; the dark rich hue, particularly in autumn, contrasting beautifully with the thickets of oak and birch, the mountain-ashes and thorns, the alders and quivering aspens, which chequered and varied the descent, and not less with the dark-green and velvet turf, which composed the level part of the narrow glen.

Yet, though thus embellished, the scene could neither be strictly termed sublime or beautiful, and scarcely even picturesque

or striking. But its extreme solitude pressed on the heart; the traveller felt that uncertainty whither he was going, or in what so wild a path was to terminate, which, at times, strikes more on the imagination than the grand features of a show-scene, when you know the exact distance of the inn where your dinner is bespoken, and at the moment preparing. These are ideas, however, of a far later age; for at the time we treat of, the picturesque, the beautiful, the sublime, and all their intermediate shades, were ideas absolutely unknown to the inhabitants and occasional visitors of Glendearg.

They had, however, attached to the scene feelings fitting the time. Its name, signifying the Red Valley, seems to have been derived, not only from the purple colour of the heath, with which the upper part of the rising banks was profusely cloathed, but also from the dark red colour of the rocks, and of the precipitous earthen banks, which in that country are called *scaurs*. Another glen, about the head of Ettrick, has acqui-

red the same name from similar circumstances; and there are probably more in Scotland to which it has been given.

As our Glendearg did not abound in mortal visitants, superstition, that it might not be absolutely destitute of inhabitants, had peopled its recesses with beings belonging to another world. The savage and capricious Brown Man of the Moors, a being which seems the genuine descendant of the northern dwarfs, was supposed to be seen there frequently, especially after the autumnal equinox, when the fogs were thick, and objects not easily distinguished. The Scottish fairies, too, a whimsical, irritable, and mischievous tribe, who, though at times capriciously benevolent, were more frequently adverse to mortals, were also supposed to have formed a residence in a particularly wild recess of the glen, of which the real name was, in allusion to that circumstance, *Corrie nan Shian*, which, in corrupted Celtic, signifies the Hollow of the Fairies. But the neighbours were more

cautious in speaking about this place, and avoided giving it a name, from an idea common then through all the British and Celtic provinces of Scotland, and still retained in many places, that to speak either good or ill of this capricious race of supernatural beings, is to provoke their resentment, and that secrecy and silence is what they chiefly desire from those who may intrude upon their revels, or discover their haunts.

A mysterious terror was thus attached to the little dale, which afforded access from the broad valley of the Tweed, up the little glen we have described, to the fortalice called the Tower of Glendearg. Beyond the knoll, where, as we have said, the little tower was situated, the hills grew more steep, and narrowed on the slender brook, so as scarce to leave a foot-path; and there the glen terminated in a wild water-fall, where a slender thread of water dashed in a precipitous line of foam over two or three precipices. Yet farther in the same

direction, and above these successive cataracts, lay a wild and extensive morass, frequented only by water-fowl, wide, waste, apparently almost interminable, and serving in a great measure to separate the inhabitants of the little glen from those who lived to the northward.

To restless and indefatigable moss-troopers, indeed, these morasses were well known, and sometimes afforded a retreat. They often rode down the glen—called at this tower—asked and received hospitality—but still with a sort of reserve on the part of its more peaceful inhabitants, who entertained them as a party of North-American Indians might be received by a new European settler, as much out of fear as hospitality, while the uppermost wish of the landlord is the speedy departure of these savage guests.

This had not always been the current of feeling in the little valley and its tower. Simon Glendinning, its former inhabitant, boasted his connection by blood to that an-

cient family of Glendonwyne, on the western border. He was used to narrate, at his fire-side, in the autumn evenings, the feats of the family to which he belonged, one of whom fell by the side of the brave Earl of Douglas at Otterbourne. On these occasions Simon usually had upon his knee an ancient broad-sword, which had belonged to his ancestors before any of the family had consented to accept a fief under the peaceful dominion of the Monks of Saint Mary's. In modern days, Simon might have lived at ease on his own estate, and quietly murmured against the fate that had doomed him to dwell there, and cut off his access to martial renown. But so many opportunities, nay, so many calls there were for him, who in those days spoke big, to make good his words by his actions, that Simon Glendinning was soon under the necessity of marching with the men of the Halidome, as it was called, of Saint Mary's, in that disastrous campaign which was concluded by the Battle of Pinkie.

The Catholic clergy were deeply interested in that national quarrel, the principal object of which was, to prevent the union of the infant Queen Mary with the son of the heretical Henry VIII. The Monks had called out their vassals, under an experienced leader. Many of themselves had taken arms, and marched to the field, under a banner representing a female, supposed to personify the Scottish Church, kneeling in the attitude of prayer, with the legend, *Afflictæ Sponsæ ne obliviscaris.**

The Scots, however, in all their wars, had more occasion for good and cautious generals than for excitation, whether political or enthusiastic. Their headlong and impatient courage uniformly induced them to rush to the action without duly weighing either their own situation, or that of their enemies, and the inevitable consequence was frequent defeat. With the dolorous slaughter of Pinkie we have nothing to do,

* Forget not the afflicted Spouse.

excepting that, among ten thousand men of low and high degree, Simon Glendinning, of the Tower of Glendearg, bit the dust, no way disparaging in his death that ancient race from which he claimed his descent.

When the doleful news, which spread terror and mourning through the whole of Scotland, reached the Tower of Glendearg, the widow of Simon, Elspeth Brydone by her family name, was alone in that desolate habitation, excepting a hind or two, alike past martial and agricultural labour, and the helpless widows and families of those who had fallen with their master. The feeling of desolation was universal;—but what availed it? The Monks, their patrons and protectors, were driven from their Abbey by the English forces, who now overrun the country, and compelled at least an appearance of submission on the part of the inhabitants. The Protector, Somerset, formed a strong camp among the ruins of the ancient Castle of Roxburgh,

and compelled the neighbouring country to come in, pay tribute, and take assurance from him, as the phrase then went. Indeed, there was no power of resistance remaining, and the few barons, whose high spirit disdained even the appearance of surrender, could only retreat into the wildest fastnesses of the country, leaving their houses and property to the wrath of the English, who detached parties through the country to distress, by military exaction, those whose chiefs had not made their submission. The Abbot and his community having retreated beyond the Forth, their lands were severely forayed, as their sentiments were held peculiarly inimical to the alliance with England.

Amongst the troops detached on this service was a small party, commanded by Stawarth Bolton, a captain in the English army, and full of the blunt and unpretending gallantry and generosity which has so often distinguished the nation. Resistance was in vain. Elspeth Brydone, when she

descried a dozen of horsemen threading their way up the glen, with a man at their head, whose scarlet cloak, bright armour, and dancing plume, proclaimed him a leader, saw no better protection for herself than to issue from the iron-grate, covered with a long mourning veil, and holding one of her two sons in each hand, to meet the Englishman—state her deserted condition, —place the little tower at his command—and beg for his mercy. She stated, in a few brief words, her intention, and added, "I submit, because I have nae means of resistance."

"And I do not ask your submission, mistress, from the same reason," replied the Englishman. "To be satisfied of your peaceful intentions is all I ask; and, from what you tell me, there is no reason to doubt them."

"At least, sir," said Elspeth Brydone, "take share of what our spence and our garners afford. Your horses are tired—your folk want refreshment."

"Not a whit—not a whit," answered the honest Englishman; "it shall never be said we disturbed by carousal the widow of a brave soldier, while she was mourning for her husband.—Comrades, face about.—Yet, stay," he added, checking his war-horse, "my parties are out in every direction; they must have some token that your family are under my assurance of safety.—Here, my little fellow," said he, speaking to the eldest boy, who might be about nine or ten years old, "lend me thy bonnet."

The child reddened, looked sulky, and hesitated, while the mother, with many a *fye* and *nay pshaw*, and such sarsenet chidings as tender mothers give to spoiled children, at length succeeded in snatching the bonnet from him, and handing it to the English leader.

Stawarth Bolton took his embroidered red cross from his barret-cap, and putting it into the loop of the boy's bonnet, said to the mistress, (for the title of lady was not given to dames of her degree,) "By this token, which

all my people will respect, you will be freed from any importunity on the part of our forayers." He placed it on the boy's head; but it was no sooner there, than the little fellow, his veins swelling, and his eyes shooting fire through tears, snatched the bonnet from his head, and, ere his mother could interfere, skimmed it into the brook. The other boy ran instantly to fish it out again, threw his brother's bonnet back to him, first taking out the cross, which, with great veneration, he kissed, and put into his bosom. The Englishman was half diverted, half surprised, with the scene.

"What mean ye by throwing away Saint George's red cross?" said he to the elder boy, in a tone betwixt jest and earnest.

"Because Saint George is a southern saint," said the child sulkily.

"Good—" said Stawarth Bolton. "And what did you mean by taking it out of the brook again, my little fellow?" he demanded of the younger.

"Because the priest says it is the com-

mon sign of salvation to all good Christians."

"Why, good again!" said the honest soldier. "I protest unto you, mistress, I envy you these boys. Are they both yours?"

Stawarth Bolton had reason to put the question, for Halbert Glendinning, the elder of the boys, had hair as dark as the raven's plumage, black eyes, large, bold, and sparkling, that glittered under eyebrows of the same complexion; a skin deep embrowned, though it could not be termed swarthy, and an air of activity, frankness, and determination far beyond his age. On the other hand, Edward, the younger brother, was light-haired, blue-eyed, and of fairer complexion, in countenance rather pale, and not exhibiting that rosy hue which colours the sanguine cheek of robust health. Yet the boy had nothing sickly or ill-conditioned in his look, but was, on the contrary, a fair and handsome child, with a smiling face, and mild, yet cheerful eye.

The mother glanced a proud motherly

glance, first at the one, and then at the other, ere she answered the Englishman, "Surely, sir, they are both my children."

"And by the same father, mistress?" said Stawarth; but, seeing a blush of displeasure arise on her brow, he instantly added, "Nay, I mean no offence; I would have asked the same question at any of my gossips in Merry Lincoln.—Well, dame, you have two fair boys; I would I could borrow one, for Dame Bolton and I live childless in our old hall.—Come, little fellows, which of you will go with me?"

The trembling mother, half-fearing as he spoke, drew the children towards her, one with either hand, while they both answered the stranger. "I will not go with you," said Halbert boldly, "for you are a false-hearted southern; and the southerns killed my father; and I will war on you to the death, when I can draw my father's sword."

"God-a mercy, my little levin-bolt," said Stawarth, "the goodly custom of deadly feud will never go down in thy day,

I presume.—And you, my fine white-head, will you not go with me, to ride a cock-horse?"

"No," said Edward, demurely, "for you are a heretic."

"Why, God-a-mercy still," said Stawarth Bolton. "Well, dame, I see I shall find no recruits for my troop from you; and yet I do envy you these two little chubby knaves." He sighed a moment, as was visible, in spite of gorget and corslet, and then added, "And yet, my dame and I would but quarrel which of the knaves we should like best, for I should wish for the black-eyed rogue—and she, I warrant me, for that blue-eyed, fair-haired darling. Natheless, we must brook our solitary wedlock, and wish joy to those that are more fortunate.—Serjeant Brittson, do thou remain here till recalled—protect this family, as under assurance—do them no wrong, and suffer no wrong to be done to them, as thou wilt answer it.—Dame, Brittson is a married man, old and steady; feed him on

what you will, but give him not over-much liquor."

Dame Glendinning again offered refreshments, but with a faultering voice, and an obvious desire her invitation should not be accepted. The fact was, that, supposing her boys as precious in the eyes of the Englishman as in her own, (the most ordinary of parental errors,) she was half afraid, that the admiration he expressed of them in his blunt manner might end in his actually carrying off one or other of the little darlings which he appeared to covet so much. She kept hold of their hands, therefore, as if her feeble strength could have been of service, had any violence been intended, and saw, with joy she could not disguise, the little party of horse countermarch, in order to descend the glen. Her feelings did not escape Stawarth Bolton. "I forgive you, dame," he said, "for being suspicious that an English falcon was hovering over your Scottish moor-brood. But fear not—those who have fewest children have

fewest cares; nor does a wise man covet those of another household. Adieu, dame; when the black-eyed rogue is able to drive a foray from England, teach him to spare women and children, for the sake of Stawarth Bolton."

"God be with you, gallant southern," said Elspeth Glendinning, but not till he was out of hearing, spurring on his good horse to regain the head of his party, whose plumage and armour was now glancing and gradually disappearing in the distance, as they winded down the glen.

"Mother," said the elder boy, "I will not say amen to a prayer for a southern."

"Mother," said the younger, more reverentially, "is it right to pray for a heretic?"

"The God to whom I pray only knows," answered poor Elspeth; "but these two words, southern and heretic, have already cost Scotland ten thousand of her best and bravest, and me a husband, and you a father; and, whether blessing or banning, I

never wish to hear them more.—Follow me to the Place, sir," she said to Brittson, "and such as we have to offer you shall be at your disposal."

CHAPTER III.

They lighted down on Tweed water,
And blew their coals sae het,
And fired the March and Teviotdale;
All in an evening late.

Auld Maitland.

The report soon spread through the patrimony of Saint Mary's and its vicinity, that the Mistress of Glendearg had received assurance from the English Captain, and that her cattle were not to be driven off, or her corn burned. Among others who heard this report, it reached the ears of a lady, who, once much higher in rank than Elspeth Glendinning, was now by the same calamity reduced to even greater misfortune.

She was the widow of a brave soldier, Walter Avenel, descended of a very ancient Border family, who once possessed immense estates in Eskdale. These had long since passed from them into other hands, but they

still enjoyed an ancient Barony of considerable extent, not very far from the patrimony of Saint Mary's, and lying upon the same side of the river with the narrow vale of Glendearg, at the head of which was the little tower of the Glendinnings. Here they had lived, bearing a respectable rank amongst the gentry of their province, though neither wealthy nor powerful. This general regard had been much augmented by the skill, courage, and enterprize which had been displayed by Walter Avenel, the last Baron.

When Scotland began to recover from the dreadful shock she had sustained after the battle of Pinkie-Cleuch, Avenel was one of the first who, assembling a small force, set an example in these bloody and unsparing skirmishes, which shewed that a nation, though conquered and overrun by invaders, may yet wage against them such a war of detail as shall in the end become fatal to the foreigners. In one of these, however, Walter Avenel fell, and the news which

came to the house of his fathers was followed by the distracting intelligence, that a party of Englishmen were coming to plunder the house and lands of his widow, in order by this act of terror to prevent others from following the example of the deceased.

The unfortunate lady had no better refuge than the miserable cottage of a shepherd among the hills, to which she was hastily removed, scarce conscious where or for what purpose her terrified attendants were removing her and her infant daughter from her own house. Here she was tended with all the duteous service of ancient times by the shepherd's wife, Tibb Tacket, who in better days had been her own bower-woman. For a time the lady was unconscious of her misery; but when the first stunning effect of grief was so far passed away that she could form an estimate of her own situation, the widow of Avenel had cause to envy the lot of her husband in his dark and silent asylum. The domestics who had guided her to her place of refuge,

were presently obliged to disperse to consult for their own safety, or to seek for necessary subsistence, and the shepherd and his wife, whose poor cottage she shared, were soon after deprived of the means of affording their late mistress even that coarse sustenance which they had gladly shared with her. Some of the English foragers had discovered and driven off the few sheep which had escaped the first researches of their avarice. Two cows shared the fate of the remnant of their stock; they had afforded the family almost their sole support, and now famine appeared to stare them in the face.

"We are broken and beggared now, out and out," said old Martin the Shepherd—and he wrung his hands in the bitterness of agony, "the thieves, the harrying thieves! not a cloot left of the hail hirsel!"

"And to see poor Grizzy and Crumbie," said his wife, "turning back their necks to the byre, and routing while the stony-hearted villains were brogging them on wi' their lances!"

"There were but four of them," said Martin, "and I have seen the day forty wad not have ventured this length. But our strength and manhood is gane with our puir maister."

"For the sake of the holy-rood, whisht man," said the goodwife, "our leddy is half gane already, as ye may see by that fleightering of the ee-lid—a word mair and she's dead outright."

"I could almost wish," said Martin, "we were a' gane, for what to do passes my puir wit. I care little for mysel, or you, Tibb,—we can make a fend—work or want—we can do baith, but she can do neither."

They canvassed their situation thus openly before the lady, convinced by the paleness of her look, her quivering lip and dead-set eye, that she neither heard nor understood what they were saying.

"There is a way," said the shepherd, "but I kenna if she could bring her heart to it,—there's Simon Glendinning's widow

of the glen yonder, has had assurance from the southern loons, and nae soldier to steer them for one cause or other. Now, if the leddie could bow her mind to take quarters with Elspeth Glendinning till better days cast up, nae doubt it wad be doing an honour to the like of her, but"——

"An honour?" answered Tibb, "ay, by my word, sic an honour as wad be pride to her kin mony a lang year after her banes were in the mould. Oh! gudeman, to hear ye even the Lady of Avenel, to seeking quarters wi' a Kirk-vassal's widow!"

"Loth should I be to wish her to it," said Martin; "but what may we do?—to stay here is mere starvation; and where to go, I'm sure I ken nae mair than ony tup I ever herded."

"Speak no more of it," said the widow of Avenel, suddenly joining in the conversation, "I will go to the Tower.—Dame Elspeth is of good folk, a widow, and the mother of orphans,—she will give us house-room until something be thought upon.

These evil showers make the low bush better than no beild."

"See there, see there," said Martin, "you see the leddy has twice our sense."

"And natural it is," said Tibb, "seeing that she is convent-bred, and can lay silk broidery, forbye white seam and shell-work."

"Do you not think," said the lady to Martin, still clasping her child to her bosom, and making it clear from what motives she desired the refuge, "that Dame Glendinning will make us welcome."

"Blythely welcome, blythely welcome, my leddy," answered Martin cheerily, "and we will deserve a welcome at her hand. Men are scarce now, my leddy, with these wars, and gie me a thought of time to it, I can do as gude a day's darg as ever I did in my life, and Tibb can sort cows with ony living woman."

"And muckle mair could I do," said Tibb, "were it in ony feasible house; but there will be neither pearlins to mend, nor

pinners to busk up in Elspeth Glendinning's."

"Whisht wi' your pride, woman," said the shepherd; "eneugh ye can do, baith outside and inside, an ye set your mind to it; and hard it is if we twa canna work for three folks' meat, forbye my dainty wee leddy there. Come awa, come awa, nae use in staying here langer; we have five Scots miles over moss and muir, and that is nae easy walk for a leddy born and bred."

Household stuff there was little or none to remove or care for; an old poney which had escaped the plunderers, owing partly to its pitiful appearance, partly from the reluctance which it shewed to be caught by strangers, was employed to carry the few blankets, and other trifles which they possessed. When Shagram came to his master's well-known whistle, he was surprised to find the poor thing had been wounded, though slightly, by an arrow, which one of the forayers had shot off in anger after he had long chased it in vain.

"Ay, Shagram," said the old man as he applied something to the wound, "must you rue the lang-bow as weel as all of us?"

"What corner in Scotland rues it not?" said the Lady of Avenel.

"Ay, ay, madam," said Martin, "God keep the kindly Scot from the cloth-yard shaft, and he will keep himself from the handy stroke. But let us go our way; the trash that is left I can come back for. There is nae ane to stir it but the good neighbours, and they——"

"For the love of God, goodman," said his wife in a remonstrating tone, "haud your peace! Think what ye're saying, and we hae sae muckle wild land to go over before we win to the girth gate."

The husband nodded acquiescence; for it was deemed highly imprudent to speak of the fairies either by their title of *good neighbours* or by any other, especially when about to pass the places which they were supposed to haunt.

They set forward on their pilgrimage on

the last day of October. "This is thy birth-day, my sweet Mary," said the mother, as a sting of bitter recollection crossed her mind. "Oh, who could have believed that the head, which, a few years since, was cradled amongst so many rejoicing friends, may perhaps this night seek a cover in vain!"

The exiled family then set forward. Mary Avenel, a lovely little girl between five and six years old, riding gipsey fashion upon Shagram, betwixt two bundles of bedding; the Lady of Avenel walking by the animal's side; Tibb leading the bridle, and old Martin walking a little before, looking anxiously around him to explore the way.

Martin's task as guide, after two or three miles walking, became more difficult than he himself had expected, or than he was willing to avow. It happened that the extensive range of pasturage, with which he was conversant, lay to the west, and to get into the little valley of Glendearg he was to proceed easterly. In the wilder districts of Scotland, the passage from one vale to

another, otherwise than by descending that which you leave, and reascending the other, is often very difficult. Heights and hollows, mosses and rocks intervene, and all those local impediments which throw a traveller out of his course. So that Martin, however sure of his general direction, became conscious, and at length was forced reluctantly to admit, that he had missed the direct road to Glendearg, though he insisted they must be very near it. "If we can but win across this wide bog," he said, "I shall warrant ye are on the top of the tower."

But to get across the bog was a point of no small difficulty. The farther they ventured into it, though proceeding with all the caution which Martin's experience recommended, the more unsound the ground became, until, after they had passed some places of great peril, their best argument for going forward came to be, that they had to encounter equal danger in returning.

The Lady of Avenel had been tenderly nurtured, but what will not a woman endure when her child is in danger? Complaining less of the dangers of the road than her attendants, who had been inured to such from their infancy, she kept herself close by the side of the poney, watching its every footstep, and ready, when it was about to flounder in the morass, to snatch her little Mary from its back.

At length they came to a place where the guide greatly hesitated, for all around him was broken lumps of heath, divided from each other by deep sloughs of black tenacious mire. After great consideration, Martin, selecting what he thought the safest path, began himself to lead forward Shagram, in order to afford greater security to the child. But Shagram snorted, laid his ears back, stretched his two feet forward, and drew his hind feet under him, so as to adopt the best possible posture for obstinate resistance, and refused to move one yard in the direction indicated. Old Martin, much

puzzled, now hesitated whether to exert his absolute authority, or to defer to the contumacious obstinacy of Shagram, and was not greatly comforted by his wife's observation, who, seeing Shagram stare with his eyes, distend his nostrils, and tremble with terror, hinted that "he surely saw more than they could see."

In this dilemma, the child suddenly exclaimed—"Bonny ladie signs to us to come yon gate." They all looked in the direction where the child pointed, but saw nothing, save a wreath of rising mist, which fancy might form into a human figure; but which afforded to Martin only the sorrowful conviction, that the danger of their situation was about to be increased by a heavy fog. He once more essayed to lead forward Shagram; but the animal was inflexible to its determination not to move in the direction Martin recommended. "Take your awn way for it then," said Martin, "and let us see what you can do for us."

Shagram, abandoned to the discretion of his own free will, set off boldly in the direction the little girl had pointed. There was nothing wonderful in this, nor in its bringing them safe to the other side of the dangerous morass; for the instinct of these animals in traversing bogs is one of the most curious parts of their nature, and is a fact generally established. But it was remarkable, that the child more than once mentioned the beautiful lady and her signals, and that Shagram seemed to be in the secret, always moving in the same direction which she indicated. The lady took little notice at the time, her mind being probably occupied by the instant danger; but her faithful attendants changed expressive looks with each other more than once.

" All-Hallow Eve !" said Tibby, in a whisper to Martin.

" For the mercy of Our Lady, not a word of that now," said Martin in reply. " Tell your beads, woman, if you cannot be silent."

When they got once more on firm ground, Martin recognized certain land-marks, or cairns, on the tops of neighbouring hills, by which he was enabled to guide his course, and ere long they arrived at the Tower of Glendearg.

It was at the sight of this little fortalice that the misery of her lot pressed hard on the poor Lady of Avenel. When by any accident they had met at church, market, or other place of public resort, she remembered the distant and respectful air with which the wife of the warlike baron was addressed by the spouse of the humble feuar. And now, so much was her pride humbled, that she was to ask to share the precarious safety of the same feuar's widow, and her pittance of food, which might perhaps be yet more precarious. Martin probably guessed what was passing in her mind, for he looked at her with a wistful glance, as if to deprecate any change of resolution; and answering to his looks, rather than his words, she said, while the sparkle of sub-

dued pride once more glanced from her eye, "If it were for myself alone, I could but die—but for this infant—the last pledge of Avenel"——

"True, my lady," said Martin hastily; and, as if to prevent the possibility of her retracting, he added, "I will step and see Dame Elspeth—I kenn'd her husband weel, and have bought and sold with him, for as great a man as he was."

Martin's tale was soon told, and met all acceptance from her companion in misfortune. The Lady of Avenel had been meek and courteous in her prosperity; in adversity, therefore, she met with the greater sympathy. Besides, there was a point of pride in sheltering and supporting a woman of such superior birth and rank. And not to do Elspeth Glendinning injustice, she felt sympathy for a woman whose fate resembled her own in so many parts, yet was so much more severe. Every species of hospitality was gladly and respectfully extended to the distressed travellers, and they

were kindly requested to stay as long at Glendearg as their circumstances rendered necessary, or their inclination prompted.

CHAPTER IV.

Ne'er be I found by thee unawed,
On that thrice hallow'd eve abroad,
When goblins haunt from flood and fen,
The steps of men.
COLLINS'S *Ode to Fear*.

As the country became more settled, the lady would have willingly returned to her husband's mansion. But that was no longer in her power. It was a reign of minority, when the strongest had the best right, and when acts of usurpation were frequent amongst those who had much power and little conscience.

Julian Avenel, the younger brother of the deceased Walter, was a person of this description. He hesitated not to seize upon his brother's house and lands, so soon as the retreat of the English permitted him. At

first, he occupied the property in the name of his niece, but when the lady proposed to return with her child to the mansion of its fathers, he gave her to understand that Avenel, being a male fief, descended to the brother, instead of the daughter, of the last possessor. The ancient philosopher declined a dispute with the emperor who commanded twenty legions, and the widow of Walter Avenel was in no condition to maintain a contest with the leader of twenty moss-troopers. Julian was also a man of service, who could back a friend in case of need, and was sure, therefore, to find protectors among the ruling powers. In short, however clear the little Mary's right to the possessions of her father, her mother saw the necessity of giving way, at least for the time, to the usurpation of her uncle.

Her patience and forbearance was so far attended with advantage, that Julian, for very shame's sake, could no longer suffer

her to be absolutely dependent on the charity of Elspeth Glendinning. A drove of cattle and a bull, (which were probably missed by some English farmer,) were sent to the pastures of Glendearg; presents of raiment and household stuff were sent liberally, and some little money, though with a more sparing hand; for those in the situation of Julian Avenel could come more easily by the goods represented, than the representing medium of value, and made their payments chiefly in kind.

In the meantime, the widows of Walter Avenel and Simon Glendinning had become habituated to each others society, and were unwilling to part. The lady could hope no more secret and secure residence than in the Tower of Glendearg, and she was now in a condition to support her share of the mutual house-keeping. Elspeth, on the other hand, felt pride, as well as pleasure, in the society of a guest of such distinction, and was at all times will-

ing to pay much greater deference than the Lady of Walter Avenel could be prevailed on to accept.

Martin and his wife diligently served the united family in their several vocations, and yielded obedience to both mistresses, though always considering themselves as the especial servants of the Lady of Avenel. This distinction sometimes occasioned a slight degree of difference between Dame Elspeth and Tibb; the former being jealous of her own consequence, and the latter apt to lay too much stress upon the rank and family of her mistress. But both were alike desirous to conceal such petty squabbles from the lady, her hostess scarce yielding to her old domestic in respect for her person. Neither did the difference exist in such a degree as to interrupt the general harmony of the family, for the one wisely gave way as she saw the other become warm; and Tibb, though she often gave the first provocation, had generally

the sense to be the first in relinquishing the argument.

The world which lay beyond was gradually forgotten by the inhabitants of this sequestered glen, and unless when she attended mass at the Monastery Church upon some high holiday, Alice of Avenel almost forgot that she once held an equal rank with the proud wives of the neighbouring barons and nobles who on such occasions crowded to the solemnity. The recollection gave her little pain. She loved her husband for himself, and in his inestimable loss all lesser subjects of regret had lost the power of interesting her. At times, indeed, she thought of claiming the protection of the Queen Regent (Mary of Guise) for her little orphan, but the fear of Julian Avenel always came between. She was sensible that he would have neither scruple nor difficulty in spiriting away the child, (if he did not proceed farther,) should he once consider its existence as

formidable to his interest.. Besides, he was a wild liver, mingling in all feuds and forays, wherever there was a spear to be broken; he evinced no purpose of marrying, and the fate which he continually was braving might at length remove him from his usurped inheritance. Alice of Avenel, therefore, judged it wise to check all ambitious thoughts for the present, and remain quiet in the rude, but peaceable retreat, to which Providence had conducted her.

It was upon an All-Hallow's Eve, when the family had resided together for nearly three years, that the domestic circle was assembled round the blazing turf-fire, in the old narrow hall of the Tower of Glendearg. The idea of the master or mistress of the mansion feeding or living apart from their domestics, was at this period never entertained. The highest end of the board, the most commodious settle by the fire,—these were the only marks of distinction; and the servants mingled with deference in-

deed, but unreproved and with freedom, in whatever conversation was going forward. But the two or three domestics, kept merely for agricultural purposes, had retired to their own cottages without, and with them a couple of wenches, usually employed within doors, the daughters of one of the hinds.

After their departure, Martin locked, first, the iron grate; and, secondly, the inner door of the tower, when the domestic circle was thus arranged. Dame Elspeth sate pulling the thread from her distaff; Tibb watched the progress of scalding the whey, which hung in a large pot upon the *crook*, a chain terminated by a hook, which was suspended in the chimney to serve the purpose of the modern crane. Martin, while busied in repairing some of the household articles, (for every man in these days was his own carpenter and smith, as well as his own tailor and shoemaker,) kept from time to time a watchful eye upon the three children.

They were allowed, however, to exercise their juvenile restlessness by running up and down the hall, behind the seats of the elder members of the family, with the privilege of occasionally making excursions into one or two small apartments which opened from it, and gave excellent opportunity to play at hide-and-seek. This night, however, the children seemed not disposed to avail themselves of their privilege of visiting these dark regions, but preferred carrying on their gambols in the vicinity of the light.

In the mean while, Alice of Avenel, sitting close to an iron candlestick, which supported a mis-shapen torch of domestic manufacture, read small detached passages from a thick clasped volume, which she preserved with the greatest care. The art of reading, the lady had acquired by her residence in a nunnery during her youth, but she seldom, of late years, put it to any other use than perusing this little volume, which formed her whole library. The fa-

mily listened to the portions which she selected, as to some good thing which there was a merit in hearing with respect, whether it was fully understood or no. To her daughter, Alice of Avenel had determined to impart their mystery more fully, but the knowledge was at that period attended with personal danger, and was not rashly to be trusted to a child.

The noise of the romping children interrupted, from time to time, the voice of the lady, and drew on the noisy culprits the rebuke of Elspeth.

"Could they not go farther a-field, if they behoved needs to make such din, and disturb the lady's good words?" And this command was backed with the threat of sending the whole party to bed if it was not attended to punctually. Acting under the injunction, the children first played at a greater distance from the party, and more quietly, and then began to stray into the adjacent apartments, as they became impatient of the restraint to which they were

subjected. But, all at once, the two boys came open-mouthed into the hall, to tell that there was an armed man in the spence.

"It must be Christie of Clint-hill," said Martin, rising; "what can have brought him here at this time?"

"Or how came he in?" said Elspeth.

"Alas, what can he seek?" said the Lady of Avenel, to whom this man, a retainer of her husband's brother, and who sometimes executed his commissions at Glendearg, was an object of secret apprehension and suspicion. "Gracious heavens!" she added, rising up, "where is my child?" All rushed to the spence, Halbert Glendinning first arming himself with a rusty sword, and the younger seizing upon the lady's book. They hastened to the spence, and were relieved of a part of their anxiety by meeting Mary at the door of the apartment. She did not seem in the slightest degree alarmed, or disturbed. They rushed into the spence, (a sort of interior apartment in which the family eat their victuals

in the summer season), but there was no one there.

"Where is Christie of Clint-hill?" said Martin.

"I do not know," said little Mary; "I never saw him."

"And what made you, ye misleard loons," said Dame Elspeth to her two boys, "come yon gate into the ha', roaring like bull-segs, to frighten the leddy, and her far frae strong?" The boys looked at each other in silence and confusion, and their mother proceeded with her lecture. "Could ye find nae night for daffin but Hallowe'en, and nae time but when the leddy was reading to us about the holy Saints? May ne'er be in my fingers, if I dinna sort ye baith for it!" The eldest boy bent his eyes on the ground, the younger began to weep, but neither spoke; and their mother would have proceeded to extremities, but for the interposition of the little maiden.

" Dame Elspeth, it was *my* fault—I did say to them, that I saw a man in the spence."

" And what made you do so, child," said her mother, " to startle us all thus ?"

" Because," said Mary, lowering her voice, " I could not help it."

" Not help it, Mary !—you occasioned all this idle noise, and you could not help it ? How mean you by that, minion ?"

" There really was an armed man in this spence," said Mary ; " and because I was surprised to see him, I cried out to Halbert and Edward"——

" She has told it herself," said Halbert Glendinning ; " or it had never been told by me."

" Nor by me neither," said Edward emulously.

" Mistress Mary," said Elspeth, " you never told us any thing before that was not true ; tell us if this was a Hallowe'en cantrip, and make an end of it." The Lady of Avenel looked as if she would have interfered, but

knew not how; and Elspeth, who was too eagerly curious to regard any distant hint, persevered in her enquiries. "Was it Christie of Clint-hill?—I would not for a mark that he were about the house, and a body no ken whare."

"It was not Christie," said Mary; "it was—it was a gentleman—a gentleman with a bright breast-plate, like what I hae seen langsyne, when we dwelt at Avenel"——

"What like was he?" continued Tibbie, who now took share in the investigation.

"Black-haired, black-eyed, with a peaked black beard," said the child, "and many a fold of pearling round his neck, and hanging down his breast ower his breast-plate; and he had a beautiful hawk, with silver bells, standing on his left hand, with a crimson silk hood upon its head"—

"Ask her no more questions, for the love of God," said the anxious menial to Elspeth, "but look to my leddy!" But the Lady of Avenel, taking Mary in her

hand, turned hastily away, and walking into the hall, gave them no opportunity of remarking in what manner she received the child's communication, which she thus cut short. What Tibb thought of it appeared from her crossing herself repeatedly, and whispering into Elspeth's ear, "Saint Mary preserve us!—the lassie has seen her father!"

When they reached the hall, they found the lady holding her daughter on her knee, and kissing her repeatedly. When they entered, she again arose, as to shun observation, and retired to the little apartment where her child and she occupied the same bed.

The boys were also sent to their cabin, and no one remained by the hall fire save the faithful Tibb and Dame Elspeth, excellent persons both, and as thorough gossips as ever wagged a tongue.

It was but natural that they should instantly resume the subject of the superna-

tural appearance, for such they deemed it, which had this night alarmed the family.

"I could hae wished it had been the de'il himself—be good to and preserve us!—rather than Christie o' the Clint-hill," said the matron of the mansion, "for the word runs rife in the country, that he is ane of the maist masterfu' thieves ever lap on horse."

"Hout-tout, Dame Elspeth," said Tibb, "fear ye naething frae Christie; tods keep their ain holes clean. You kirk-folk make sic a fasherie about men shifting a wee bit for their living! Our Border-lairds would ride with few men at their back, if a' the light-handed lads were out o' gate."

"Better they rade wi' nane than distress the country-side the gate they do," said Dame Elspeth.

"But wha is to haud back the Southron then," said Tibb, "if ye take away the lances and broad-swords? I trow we auld

wives couldna do that wi' rock and wheel, and as little the monks wi' bell and book."

"And sae weel as the lances and broadswords hae kept them back, I trow!—I was mair beholden to ae Southron, and that was Stawarth Bolton, than to a' the Border-riders ever wore Saint Andrew's cross—I reckon their skelping back and forward, and lifting honest men's gear, has been a main cause of a' the breach between us and England, and I am sure that cost me a kind good man. They speak about the wedding of the Prince and our Queen, but it's as like to be the driving of the Cumberland folk's stocking that brought them down on us like dragons." Tibb would not have failed in other circumstances to answer what she thought reflections disparaging to her country-folk; but she recollected that Dame Elspeth was mistress of the family, curbed her own zealous patriotism, and hastened to change the subject.

"And is it not strange," she said, "that

the heiress of Avenel should hae seen her father this blessed night?"

"And ye think it was her father then," said Elspeth Glendinning.

"What else can I think?" said Tibb.

"It may have been something waur, in his likeness," said Dame Glendinning.

"I ken naething about that," said Tibb, —"but his likeness it was, that I will be sworn to, just as he used to ride out a hawking; for having enemies in the country, he seldom laid off the breast-plate; and, for my part," added Tibb, "I dinna think a man looks like a man unless he has steel on his breast and by his side too."

"I have no skill of your harness on breast or side either," said Dame Glendinning; "but I ken there is little luck in Hallowe'en sights, for I have had ane mysell."

"Indeed, Dame Elspet?" said old Tibb, edging her stool closer to the huge elbow-chair occupied by her friend, "I should like to hear about that."

"Ye maun ken then, Tibb," said Dame Glendinning, "that when I was a hempie of nineteen or twenty, it wasna my fault if I wasna at a' the merry-makings time about."

"That was very natural," said Tibb; "but ye hae sobered since that, or ye wadna haud our braw gallants sae lightly."

"I have had that wad sober me or ony ane," said the matron. "Aweel, Tibb, a lass like me wasna to lack wooers, for I wasna sae ill favoured that the tikes wad bark after me."

"How should that be," said Tibb, "and you sic a weel-favoured woman to this day?"

"Fie, fie, cummer," said the matron of Glendearg, hitching her seat of honour, in her turn, a little nearer to the cuttie-stool on which Tibb was seated; "weel-favoured is past my time of day; but I might pass then, for I wasna sae tocherless but what I had a bit land at my breast-lace. My father was portioner of Littledearg."

"Ye hae tell'd me that before," said Tibb; "but anent the Hallowe'en."

"Aweel, aweel, I had mair joes than ane, but I favoured nane o' them; and sae, at Hallowe'en, Father Nicolas the cellarer—he was cellarer before this father, Father Clement, that now is—was cracking his nuts and drinking his brown beer with us, and as blythe as might be, and they would have me try a cantrip to ken wha suld wed me; and the Monk said there was nae ill in it, and if there was, he would assoil me for it. And wha but I into the barn to winnow my three weights o' naething—sair, sair my mind misgave me for fear of wrang-doing and wrang-suffering baith; but I had aye a bauld spirit. I had not winnowed the last weight clean out, and the moon was shining bright upon the floor, when in stalked the presence of my dear Simon Glendinning, that is now happy. I never saw him plainer in my life than I did that moment; he held up an

arrow as he passed me, and I swarf'd awa' wi' fright. Muckle wark there was to bring me to mysel' again, and sair they tried to make me believe it was a trick of Father Nicolas and Simon between them, and that the arrow was to signify Cupid's shaft, as the Father called it; and mony a time Simon wad threep it to me after I was married—gude man, he liked not it should be said that he was seen out o' the body!—But mark the end o' it, Tibb; we were married, and the grey-goose wing was the death o' him, after a'."

"As it has been of ower mony brave men," said Tibb; "I wish there wasna sic a bird as a goose in the wide warld, forbye the clecking that we hae at the burnside."

"But tell me, Tibb," said Dame Glendinning, "what does your leddy aye do reading on that thick black book wi' the silver clasps?—there are ower mony gude words in it to come frae ony body but a priest—An' it were about Robin Hood, or

some o' David Lindsay's ballants, ane wad ken better what to say to it. I am no misdoubting your mistress nae way, but I wad like ill to hae a decent house haunted wi' ghaists and gyre carlins."

"Ye hae nae reason to doubt my leddy, or ony thing she says or does, Dame Glendinning," said the faithful Tibb, something offended; "and touching the bairn, it's weel ken'd she was born on Hallowe'en, was nine years gane, and they that are born on Hallowe'en whiles see mair than ither folk."

"And that wad be the cause, then, that the bairn didna mak muckle din about what it saw—if it had been my Halbert himself, forbye Edward, who is of softer nature, he wad hae yammered the hail night of a constancy. But it's like Mistress Mary has sic sights mair natural to her."

"That may weel be," said Tibb; "for on Hallowe'en she was born, as I tell ye, and our auld parish priest wad fain hae had the night ower, and All-Hallow day begun.

But for a' that, the sweet bairn is just like ither bairns, as ye may see yoursel; and except this blessed night, and ance before when we were in that weary bog on the road here, I kenna that it saw mair than ither folk."

"But what saw she in the bog, then," said Dame Glendinning, "forbye moor-cocks and heather-blutters?"

"The wean saw something like a white leddy that weised us the gate," said Tibb, "when we were like to hae perished in the moss-haggs—certain it was that Shagram reisted, and I ken Martin thinks he saw something."

"And what might the white leddy be?" said Elspeth; "have ye ony guess o' that?"

"It's weel ken'd that, Dame Elspeth," said Tibb; "if ye had lived under grit folk, as I hae dune, ye wadna be to seek in that matter."

"I hae aye keepit my ain ha' house abune my head," said Elspeth not without emphasis, "and if I havena lived wi' grit folk, grit folk have lived wi' me."

"Weel, weel, dame," said Tibb, "your pardon's prayed, there was nae offence meant. But ye maun ken the great ancient families canna be just served wi' the ordinary saunts, (praise to them) like Saunt Anthony, Saunt Cuthbert, and the like, that come and gang at every sinner's bidding, but they hae a sort of saunts or angels, or what not, to themsels; and as for the White Maiden of Avenel, she is ken'd ower the haill country. And she is aye seen to yammer and wail before ony o' them dies, as was weel ken'd by twenty folk before the death of Walter Avenel, haly be his cast!"

"If she can do nae mair than that," said Elspeth somewhat scornfully, "they needna make mony vows to her I trow. Can she make nae better fend for them than that, and has naething better to do than wait on them?"

"Mony braw services can the White Maiden do for them to the boot of that, and has dune in the auld histories," said

Tibb, "but I mind o' naething in my day, except it was her that the bairn saw in the bog."

"Aweel, aweel, Tibbie," said Dame Glendinning, rising and lighting the iron lamp, "these are great privileges of your grand folks. But Our Lady and Saint Paul are good enough saunts for me, and I'se warrant them never leave me in a bog that they can help me out o', seeing I send four waxen candles to their chapels every Candlemas; and if they are not seen to weep at my death, I'se warrant them smile at my joyful rising again, which Heaven send to all of us, Amen."

"Amen," answered Tibbie devoutly; "and now it's time I should hap up the wee bit gathering turf, as the fire is ower low."

Busily she set herself to perform this duty. The relict of Simon Glendinning did but pause a moment to cast a heedful and cautious glance all around the hall, to see that nothing was out of its proper place;

then wishing Tibbie good-night, she retired to her repose.

"The de'il's in the carline," said Tibb to herself, "because she war the wife of a cock-laird, she thinks herself grander, I trow, than the bower-woman of a lady of that ilk." Having given vent to her suppressed spleen in this little ejaculation, Tibb also betook herself to slumber.

CHAPTER V.

A priest, ye cry, a priest!—lame shepherds they,
How shall they gather in the straggling flock?
Dumb dogs which bark not—how shall they compel
The loitering vagrants to the Master's fold?
Fitter to bask before the blazing fire,
And snuff the mess neat-handed Phillis dresses,
Than on the snow-wreath battle with the wolf.

Reformation.

THE health of the Lady of Avenel had been gradually decaying ever since her disaster. It seemed, as if the few years which followed her husband's death had done on her the work of half a century. She lost the fresh elasticity of form, the colour and the mien of health, and became wasted, wan, and feeble. She appeared to have no formed complaint; yet it was evident to those who looked on her,

that her strength waned daily. Her lips at length became blanched and her eye dim; yet she spoke not of any desire to see a priest, until Elspeth Glendinning in her zeal could not refrain from touching upon a point which she deemed essential to salvation. Alice of Avenel received her hint kindly, and thanked her for it.

"If any good priest would take the trouble of such a journey," she said, "he should be welcome; for the prayers and lessons of the good must be at all times advantageous."

This quiet acquiescence was not quite what Elspeth Glendinning wished or expected. She made up, however, by her own enthusiasm for the lady's want of eagerness to avail herself of ghostly counsel, and Martin was dispatched with such haste as Shagram would make, to pray one of the religious men of Saint Mary's to come up to administer the last consolations to the widow of Walter de Avenel.

When the Sacristan had announced to

the Lord Abbot, that the Lady of the umquhile Walter de Avenel was in very weak health in the Tower of Glendearg, and desired the assistance of a father confessor; the lordly monk paused on the request.

"We do remember Walter de Avenel," he said; "a good knight and a valiant; he was dispossessed of his lands, and slain by the Southron—May not the lady come hither to the sacrament of confession? the road is distant and painful to travel."

"The lady is unwell, holy father," answered the Sacristan, "and unable to bear the journey."

"True—ay—yes—then must one of our brethren go to her—Knowest thou if she hath aught of a jointure from this Walter de Avenel?"

"Very little, holy father," said the Sacristan; "she has resided at Glendearg since her husband's death, well nigh on the charity of a poor widow, called Elspeth Glendinning."

"Why, thou knowest all the widows in the country-side?" said the Abbot. "Ho! ho! ho!" and he shook his portly sides at his own jest.

"Ho! ho! ho!" echoed the Sacristan, in the tone and tune in which an inferior applauds the jest of his superior.—Then added, with a hypocritical snuffle, and a sly twinkle of his eye, "It is our duty, most holy father, to comfort the widow —He! he! he!"

This last laugh was more moderate, until the Abbot should put his sanction on the jest.

"Ho! ho!" said the Abbot; "then, to leave jesting, Father Philip, take thou thy riding gear, and go to confess this Dame Avenel."

"But," said the Sacristan——

"But me no *Buts*; neither But nor If pass between monk and abbot, Father Philip; the bands of discipline must not be relaxed—heresy gathers force like a snow-ball—the multitude expect confessions and preachings from the Benedic-

tines, as they would from so many beggarly friars—and we may not desert the vineyard, though the toil be grievous unto us."

"And with so little advantage to the holy monastery," said the Sacristan.

"True, Father Philip; but wot you not that that which preventeth harm doth good? This Julian de Avenel lives a light and evil life, and should we neglect the widow of his brother, he might foray our lands, and we never able to show who hurt us—moreover it is our duty to an ancient family, who, in their day, have been benefactors to the Abbey. Away with thee instantly, brother; ride night and day, an it be necessary, and let men see how diligent Abbot Boniface and his faithful children are in the execution of their spiritual duty—toil not deterring them, for the glen is five miles in length—fear not withholding them, for it is said to be haunted of spectres—nothing moving them from pursuit of their spiritual calling; to the confusion of calumnious heretics, and the com-

fort and edification of all true and faithful sons of the Catholic Church. I wonder what our brother Eustace will say to this?"

Breathless with his own picture of the dangers and toil which he was to encounter, and the fame which he was to acquire, both by proxy, the Abbot moved slowly to finish his luncheon in the refectory, and the Sacristan, with no very good will, accompanied old Martin on his return to Glendearg; the greatest impediment in the journey being the trouble of restraining his pampered mule, that she might tread in something like an equal pace with poor jaded Shagram.

After remaining an hour in private with his penitent, the Monk returned moody and full of thought. Dame Elspeth, who had placed for the honoured guest some refreshment in the hall, was struck with the embarrassment which appeared in his countenance. Elspeth watched him with great anxiety. She observed there was that on his brow which rather resembled a person come from hearing the confession

of some enormous crime, than the look of a confessor who resigns a reconciled penitent, not to earth, but to heaven. After long hesitating, she could not at length refrain from hazarding a question. She was sure, she said, the leddy had made an easy shrift. Five years had they resided together, and she could safely say, no woman lived better.

"Woman," said the Sacristan sternly, "thou speakest thou knowest not what—What avails clearing the outside of the platter, if the inside be foul with heresy?"

"Our dishes and trenchers are not so clean as they could be wished, holy father," said Elspeth, but half understanding what he said, and beginning with her apron to wipe the dust from the plates, of which she supposed him to complain.

"Forbear, Dame Elspeth," said the Monk; "your plates are clean as wooden trenchers and pewter flagons can well be; the foulness of which I speak is of that pestilential heresy which is daily becoming ingrained

in this our Holy Church of Scotland, and as a canker-worm in the rose-garland of the Spouse."

"Holy Mother of Heaven," said Dame Elspeth, crossing herself, "have I kept house with a heretic?"

"No, Elspeth, no," replied the Monk; "it were too strong a speech for me to make of this unhappy lady, but I would I could say she is free from heretical opinions. Alas, they fly about like the pestilence by noon-day, and infect even the first and fairest of the flock. For it is easy to see of this dame, that she hath been high in judgment as in rank."

"And she can write and read, I had almost said, as weel as your reverence," said Elspeth.

"Whom doth she write to, and what doth she read?" said the Monk eagerly.

"Nay," replied Elspeth, "I cannot say I ever saw her write at all, but her maiden that was—she now serves the family—says she can write—And for reading, she has

often read to us good things out of a thick black volume with silver clasps."

"Let me see it," said the Monk, hastily, "on your allegiance as a true vassal—on your faith as a Catholic Christian—instantly—instantly let me see it."

The good woman hesitated, alarmed at the tone in which the confessor took up her information; and being moreover of opinion, that what so good a woman as the Lady of Avenel studied so devoutly, could not be of a tendency actually evil. But borne down by the clamour, exclamations, and something like threats used by Father Philip, she at length brought him the fatal volume. It was easy to do this without suspicion on the part of the owner, as she lay on her bed exhausted with the fatigue of a long conference with her confessor, and as the small *round*, or turret closet, in which was the book and her other trifling property, was accessible by another door. Of all her effects the book was the last she would have thought of securing, for of what use or in-

terest could it be in a family who neither read themselves, nor were in the habit of seeing any who did? so that Dame Elspeth had no difficulty in possessing herself of the volume, although her heart all the while accused her of an ungenerous and an inhospitable part towards her friend and inmate. The double power of a landlord and a feudal superior were before her eyes; and to say truth, the boldness, with which she might otherwise have resisted this double authority, was, I grieve to say it, much qualified by the curiosity she entertained, as a daughter of Eve, to have some explanation respecting the mysterious volume which the lady cherished with so much care, yet whose contents she imparted with such caution. For never had the lady read them any passage from the book in question until the iron door of the tower was locked, and all possibility of intrusion prevented. Even then she had shewn, by the selection of particular passages, that she was more anxious to impress on their minds the princi-

ples which the volume contained, than to introduce them to it as a new rule of faith.

When Elspeth, half curious, half remorseful, had placed the book in the Monk's hands, he exclaimed, after turning over the leaves, "Now, by mine order, it is as I suspected!—My mule, my mule!—I will abide no longer here—well hast thou done, dame, in placing in my hands this perilous volume."

"Is it then witchcraft or devil's work?" said Dame Elspeth, in great agitation.

"Nay, God forbid," said the Monk, signing himself with the cross, "it is the Holy Scripture. But it is rendered into the vulgar tongue, and therefore, by the order of the Holy Catholic Church, unfit to be in the hands of any lay person."

"And yet is the Holy Scripture communicated for our common salvation," said Elspeth; "good father, you must instruct mine ignorance better; but lack of wit cannot be a deadly sin, and truly, to my poor

thinking, I should be glad to read the Holy Scripture."

"I dare say thou wouldst," said the Monk; "and even thus did our mother Eve seek to have knowledge of good and evil, and thus Sin came into the world, and Death by Sin."

"I am sure, and it is true," said Elspeth; "O, if she had dealt by the counsel of Saint Peter and Saint Paul!"

"If she had reverenced the command of Heaven," said the Monk, "which, as it gave her birth, life, and happiness, fixed upon the grant such conditions as best corresponded with its holy pleasure. I tell thee, Elspeth, *the Word slayeth*—that is, the text alone, read with unskilled eye and unhallowed lips, is like those strong medicines which sick men take by the advice of the learned. Such patients recover and thrive; while those dealing in them at their own hand, shall perish by their own deed."

"Nae doubt, nae doubt," said the poor woman, "your reverence knows best."

"Not I," said Father Philip, in a tone as deferential as he thought could possibly become the Sacristan of Saint Mary's,—"Not I, but the Holy Father of Christendom, and our own holy father the Lord Abbot, know best. I, the poor Sacristan of Saint Mary's, can but repeat what I hear from others my superiors. Yet of this, good woman, be assured,—the Word—the mere Word slayeth. But the church hath her ministers to gloze and to expound the same unto her faithful congregation; and this I say, not so much, my beloved brethren—I mean, my beloved sister, (for the Sacristan had got unto the end of one of his old ser mons)—"This I speak not so much of the rectors, curates, and secular clergy, so called because they live after the fashion of the *seculum* or age, unbound by those ties which sequestrate us from the world; neither do I speak this of the mendicant friars, whether black or grey, whether crossed or uncrossed; but of the Monks, and especially of the Monks Benedictine, reformed on the

rule of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, thence called Cistercian, of which Monks, Christian brethren—sister I would say—great is the happiness and glory of the country in possessing the holy ministers of Saint Mary's, whereof I, though an unworthy brother, may say it hath produced more saints, more bishops, more popes—may our patrons make us thankful!—than any holy foundation in Scotland. Wherefore——But I see Martin hath my mule in readiness, and so I will but salute you with the kiss of sisterhood, which maketh not ashamed, and so betake me to my toilsome return, for the glen is of bad reputation for the evil spirits which haunt it. Moreover, I may arrive too late at the bridge, whereby I may be obliged to take the river, which I observed to be somewhat waxen."

Accordingly he took his leave of Dame Elspeth, confounded by the rapidity of his utterance, and the doctrine he gave forth, and by no means easy on the subject of the book, which her conscience told her she

should not have communicated to any one, without the knowledge of its owner.

Notwithstanding the haste which the Monk as well as his mule made to return to better quarters than they had left at the head of Glendearg; notwithstanding the eager desire Father Philip had to be the very first who should acquaint the Abbot that a copy of the book they most dreaded had been found within the Halidome, or patrimony of the Abbey; notwithstanding, moreover, certain feelings which induced him to hurry as fast as possible through the gloomy and evil-reputed glen, still the difficulties of the road, and the rider's want of habitude of quick motion were such, that twilight came upon him ere he had nearly cleared the narrow valley.

It was indeed a gloomy ride. The two sides of the valley were so near, that at every double of the river the shadows from the western sky fell upon, and totally obscured, the eastern bank; the thickets of copsewood seemed to wave with a porten-

tous agitation of boughs and leaves, and the very crags and scaurs seemed higher and grimmer than they had appeared to the Monk while he was travelling in day-light, and in company. Father Philip was heartily rejoiced when, emerging from the narrow glen, he gained the open valley of the Tweed, which held on its majestic course from current to pool, and from pool stretched away to other currents, with a dignity peculiar to itself amongst the Scottish rivers; for whatever may have been the drought of the season, the Tweed usually fills up the space between its banks, seldom leaving these extensive sheets of shingle which deform the margin of many of the celebrated Scottish streams.

The Monk, insensible to beauties which the age had not regarded as deserving of notice, was nevertheless, like a prudent general, pleased to find himself out of the narrow glen in which the Enemy might have stolen upon him unperceived. He drew up his bridle, reduced his mule to her na-

tural and luxurious amble, instead of the agitating and broken trot at which, to his no small inconvenience, she had hitherto proceeded, and, wiping his brow, gazed forth at leisure on the broad moon, which, now mingling with the lights of evening, was rising over field and forest, village and fortalice, and, above all, over the stately Monastery, seen far and dim amid the yellow light.

The worst part of this magnificent view, in the Monk's apprehension, was that the Monastery stood on the opposite side of the river, and that of the many fine bridges which have since been built across that classical stream, not one then existed. There was, however, in recompense, a bridge then standing which has since disappeared, although its ruins may be still traced by the curious.

It was of a very peculiar form. Two strong abutments were built on either side of the river, at a part where the stream was peculiarly contracted. Upon a rock

in the centre of the current was built a solid piece of masonry, constructed like the pier of a bridge, and presenting like a pier an angle to the current of the stream. The masonry continued solid until the pier rose to a level with the two abutments upon either side, and from thence the building arose in the form of a tower. The lower storey of this tower consisted only of an arch-way or passage through the building, over either entrance to which hung a draw-bridge with counter-poises, either of which, when dropped, connected the archway with the opposite abutment, where the further end of the draw-bridge rested. When both bridges were thus lowered, the passage over the river was complete.

The bridge-keeper, who was the dependent of a neighbouring baron, resided with his family in the second and third stories of the tower, which, when both draw-bridges were raised, formed an insulated fortalice in the midst of the river. He was entitled to a small toll or custom for the passage,

concerning the amount of which disputes sometimes arose between him and the passengers. It is needless to say, that the bridge-ward had usually the better of these disputes, since he could at pleasure detain the traveller on the opposite side; or, suffering him to pass half the way, might keep him prisoner in his tower till they were agreed on the rate of pontage.

But it was most frequently with the Monks of Saint Mary's that the warder had to dispute his perquisites. These holy men insisted for, and at length obtained a right of gratuitous passage to themselves, greatly to the discontent of the bridge-keeper. But when they demanded the same immunity for the numerous pilgrims who visited the shrine, the bridge-keeper waxed restive, and was supported by his lord in his resistance. The controversy grew animated on both sides; the Abbot menaced excommunication, and the keeper of the bridge, though unable to retaliate in kind, yet made each individual Monk who had to cross and

re-cross the river, endure a sort of purgatory, ere he would accommodate them with a passage. This was a great inconvenience, and would have proved a more serious one, but that the river was fordable for men and horse in ordinary weather.

It was a fine moonlight night, as we have already said, when Father Philip approached this passage, the singular construction of which gives a curious idea of the insecurity of the times. The river was not in flood, but it was above its ordinary level—*a heavy water*, as it is called in that country, through which the Monk had no particular inclination to ride, if he could manage the matter better.

"Peter, my good friend," cried the Sacristan, raising his voice; "my very excellent friend, Peter, be so kind as to lower the draw-bridge. Peter, I say, dost thou not hear?—it is thy gossip, Father Philip, who calls thee."

Peter heard him perfectly well, and saw him into the bargain; but, as he had consi-

dered the Sacristan as peculiarly his enemy in his dispute with the convent, he went quietly to bed, after reconnoitring the Monk through his loop-hole, observing to his wife, that "a riding the water in a moon-light night would do the Sacristan no harm, and would teach him the value of a brigg the neist time, on whilk a man might pass high and dry, winter and summer, flood and ebb."

After exhausting his voice in entreaties and threats, which were equally unattended to by Peter of the Brigg, as he was called, Father Philip at length moved down the river to take the ordinary ford at the head of the next stream. Cursing the rustic obstinacy of Peter, he began, nevertheless, to persuade himself that the passage of the river by the ford was not only safe, but pleasant. The banks and scattered trees were so beautifully reflected from the bosom of the dark stream, the whole cool and delicious picture formed so pleasing a contrast to his late agitation, to the warmth occa-

sioned by his vain endeavours to move the relentless porter of the bridge, that the result was rather agreeable than otherwise.

As Father Philip came close to the water's edge, at the spot where he was to enter it, there sat a female under a large broken scathed oak tree, or rather under the remains of such a tree, weeping, wringing her hands, and looking earnestly on the current of the river. The Monk was struck with astonishment to see a female there at that time of night. But he was, in all honest service,—and if a step farther, I put it upon his own conscience,—a devoted squire of dames. After observing the maiden for a moment, although she seemed to take no notice of his presence, he was moved by her distress and willing to offer his assistance. "Damsel," said he, "thou seemest in no ordinary distress; peradventure, like myself, thou hast been refused passage at the bridge by the churlish keeper, and thy crossing may concern thee either for performance of a vow, or some other weighty charge."

The maiden uttered some inarticulate sounds, looked at the river, and then in the face of the Sacristan. It struck Father Philip at that instant, that a Highland Chief of distinction had been for some time expected to pay his vows at the shrine of Saint Mary's; and that possibly this fair maiden might be one of his family, travelling alone for accomplishment of a vow, or left behind by some accident, to whom, therefore, it would be but right and cautious to use every civility in his power, especially as she seemed unacquainted with the Lowland tongue. Such at least was the only motive the Sacristan was ever known to assign for his courtesy; if there was any other, I once more refer it to his own conscience.

To express himself by signs, the common language of all nations, the cautious Sacristan first pointed to the river, then to his mule's crupper, and then made, as gracefully as he could, a sign to induce the fair solitary to mount behind him. She seemed

to understand his meaning, for she rose up as if to accept his offer, and while the good Monk, who, as we have hinted, was no great cavalier, laboured, with the pressure of the right leg and the use of the left rein, to place his mule with her side to the bank in such a position that the lady might mount with ease, she rose from the ground with rather portentous activity, and at one bound sate behind the Monk upon the animal, much the firmer rider of the two. The mule by no means seemed to approve of this double burthen; she bounded, bolted, and would soon have thrown Father Philip over her head, had not the maiden with a firm hand detained him in the saddle.

At length the restive brute changed her humour; and, from refusing to budge off the spot, suddenly stretched her nose homeward, and dashed into the ford as fast as she could scamper. A new terror now invaded the Monk's mind—the ford seemed unusually deep, the water eddied off in strong ripple from the counter of the mule,

and began to rise upon her side. Philip lost his presence of mind, which was at no time his most ready attribute, the mule yielded to the weight of the current, and as the rider was not attentive to keep her head turned up the river, she drifted downward, lost the ford and her footing at once, and began to swim with her head down the stream. And what was sufficiently strange, at the same moment, notwithstanding the extreme peril, the damsel began to sing, thereby increasing, if any thing could increase, the bodily fear of the worthy Sacristan.

I.

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
Both current and ripple are dancing in light.
We have roused the night raven, I heard him croak,
As we plashed along beneath the oak
That flings its broad branches so far and so wide,
Their shadows are dancing in midst of the tide.
"Who wakens my nestlings," the raven he said,
"My beak shall ere morn in his blood be red,
For a blue swolen corpse is a dainty meal,
And I'll have my share with the pike and the eel."

II.

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
There's a golden gleam on the distant height;
There's a silver shower on the alders dank,
And the drooping willows that wave on the bank.
I see the Abbey, both turret and tower,
It is all astir for the vesper hour;
The Monks for the chapel are leaving each cell,
But where's Father Philip, should toll the bell?

III.

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
Downward we drift through shadow and light.
Under yon rock the eddies sleep,
Calm and silent, dark and deep.
The Kelpy has risen from the fathomless pool,
He has lighted his candle of death and of dool:
Look, Father, look, and you'll laugh to see
How he gapes and glares with his eyes on thee!

IV.

Good luck to your fishing, whom watch ye to night?
A man of mean or a man of might?
Is it layman or priest that must float in your cove,
Or lover who crosses to visit his love?
Hark! heard ye the Kelpy reply as we passed,—
"God's blessing on the warder, he lock'd the bridge fast!
All that come to my cove are sunk,
Priest or layman, lover or monk."

How long the damsel might have conti-

nued to sing, or where the terrified Monk's journey might have ended, is uncertain. As she sung the last stanza, they arrived at, or rather in, a broad tranquil sheet of water, caused by a strong wier or dam-head, running across the river, which dashed in a broad cataract over the barrier. The mule, whether from choice, or influenced by the suction of the current, made towards the cut intended to supply the convent mills, and entered it half swimming half wading, and pitching the unlucky Monk to and fro in the saddle at a fearful rate.

As his person flew hither and thither, his garment became loose, and in an effort to retain it, his hand lighted on the volume of the Lady of Avenel which was in his bosom. No sooner had he grasped it, than his companion pitched him out of the saddle into the stream, where, still keeping her hand on his collar, she gave him two or three good souses in the watery fluid, so as to ensure that every part of him had its share of wetting, and then quitted her hold when he was so

near the side that by a slight effort (of a great one he was incapable), he might scramble on shore. This accordingly he accomplished, and turning his eyes to see what had become of his extraordinary companion, she was no where to be seen, but still he heard as if from the surface of the river, and mixing with the noise of the water breaking over the dam-head, a fragment of her wild song, which seemed to run thus:

Landed—landed! the black book hath won,
Else had you seen Berwick with morning sun!
Sain ye, and save ye, and blythe mot ye be,
For seldom they land that go swimming with me.

The ecstacy of the Monk's terror could be endured no longer; his head grew dizzy, and, after staggering a few steps onward and running himself against a wall, he sunk down in a state of insensibility.

CHAPTER VI.

Now let us sit in conclave. That these weeds
Be rooted from the vineyard of the church,
That these foul tares be severed from the wheat,
We are, I trust, agreed.—Yet how to do this,
Nor hurt the wholesome crop and tender vine-plants,
Craves good avisement.

The Reformation.

THE vesper service in the Monastery Church of St Mary's was now over. The Abbot had disrobed himself of his magnificent vestures of ceremony, and resumed his ordinary habit, which was a black gown, worn over a white cassock, with a narrow scapulary; a decent and venerable dress, which was well calculated to set off to advantage the portly mien of Abbot Boniface.

In quiet times no one could have filled the state of a mitred Abbot, for such was

his dignity, more decently than this worthy prelate. He had, no doubt, many of those habits of self-indulgence which men are apt to acquire who live for themselves alone. He was vain, moreover; and when boldly confronted, had sometimes shewn symptoms of timidity, not very consistent with the high claims which he preferred as an eminent member of the church, or with the punctual deference which he exacted from his religious brethren, and all who were placed under his command. But he was hospitable, charitable, and by no means of himself disposed to proceed with severity against any one. In short, he would in other times have slumbered out his term of preferment with as much credit as any other "purple Abbot," who lived easily, but at the same time decorously—slept soundly, and disquieted himself with no dreams.

But the wide alarm spread through the whole Church of Rome by the progress of the reformed doctrines, sorely disturbed the repose of Abbot Boniface, and opened

to him a wide field of duties and cares which he had never so much as dreamed of. There were opinions to be combatted and refuted practices to be enquired into—heretics to be detected and punished—the fallen off to be reclaimed—the wavering to be confirmed—scandal to be removed from the clergy, and the vigour of discipline to be re-established. Post upon post arrived at the Monastery of St Mary's—horses reeking, and riders exhausted—this from the Privy Council, that from the Primate of Scotland, and this other again from the Queen Mother, exhorting, approving, condemning, requesting advice upon this subject, and requiring information upon that.

These missives Abbot Boniface received with an important air of helplessness, or a helpless air of importance, whichever the reader may please to term it, evincing at once gratified vanity, and profound trouble of mind.

The sharp-witted Primate of Saint Andrews had foreseen the deficiencies of the

Prior of St Mary's, and endeavoured to provide for them by getting admitted into his Monastery as Sub-Prior a brother Cistercian, a man of parts and knowledge, devoted to the service of the Catholic church, and very capable not only to advise the Abbot upon occasions of difficulty, but to make him sensible of his duty in case he should be, from good nature or timidity, disposed to shrink from it.

Father Eustace played the same part in the Monastery as the old general who, in foreign armies, is placed at the elbow of the Prince of the Blood, who nominally commands in chief, on condition of attempting nothing without the advice of his dry-nurse; and he shared the fate of all such dry-nurses, being heartily disliked as well as feared by his principal. Still, however, the Primate's intention was fully answered. Father Eustace became the constant theme and often the bug-bear of the worthy Abbot, who hardly dared to turn himself in his bed without considering what Father

Eustace would think of it. In every case of difficulty, Father Eustace was summoned, and his opinion asked; and no sooner was the embarrassment removed, than the Abbot's next thought was how to get rid of his adviser. In every letter which he wrote to those in the government, he recommended Father Eustace to some high church preferment, a bishopric or an abbey; and as they dropped one after another, and were otherwise conferred, he began to think, as he confessed to the Sacristan in the bitterness of his spirit, that the Monastery of St Mary's had got a life-rent lease of their Sub-Prior.

Yet more indignant he would have been, had he suspected that Father Eustace's ambition was fixed upon his own mitre, which, from some attacks of an apoplectic nature, which the Abbot's friends deemed more serious than he himself, it was supposed might be shortly vacant. But the confidence which, like other dignitaries, he reposed in his own health, prevented Abbot

Boniface from imagining that it held any concatenation with the motions of Father Eustace.

The necessity under which he found himself of consulting with his grand adviser, in cases of real difficulty, rendered the worthy Abbot particularly desirous of doing without him in all ordinary cases of administration, though not without considering what Father Eustace would have said of the matter. He scorned, therefore, to give a hint to the Sub-Prior of the bold stroke by which he had dispatched Brother Philip to Glendearg; but when the vespers came without his re-appearance he became a little uneasy, the more as other matters weighed upon his mind. The feud with the warder or keeper of the bridge threatened to be attended with bad consequences, as the man's quarrel was taken up by the martial Baron under whom he served; and pressing letters of an unpleasant tendency had just arrived from the Primate. Like a gouty man, who catches hold of his crutch while he curses the in-

firmity which reduces him to use it, the Abbot, however reluctant, found himself obliged to require Eustace's presence, after the service was over, in his house, or rather palace, which was attached to, and made part of, the Monastery.

Abbot Boniface was seated in his high-backed chair, the grotesque carved back of which terminated in a mitre, before a fire where two or three large logs were reduced to one red glowing mass of charcoal. At his elbow, on an oaken stand, stood the remains of a roasted capon, on which his reverence had made his evening meal, flanked by a goodly stoup of Bourdeaux of excellent flavour. He was gazing indolently on the fire, partly engaged in meditation on his past and present fortunes, partly occupied by endeavouring to trace towers and steeples in the red embers.

"Yes," thought the Abbot to himself, "in that red perspective I could fancy to myself the peaceful towers of Dundrennan, where I passed my life ere I was called to pomp and to trouble. A quiet brotherhood

we were, regular in our monastic duties; and when the frailties of humanity prevailed over us, we confessed, and were absolved by each other, and the most formidable part of the penance was the jest of the convent on the culprit. I can almost fancy that I see the cloister-garden, and the pear-trees which I grafted with my own hands. And for what have I changed all this, but to be overwhelmed with business which concerns me not, to be called My Lord Abbot, and to be tutored by Father Eustace? I would these towers were the Abbey of Aberbrothock, and Father Eustace the Abbot,—or I would he were in the fire on any terms, so I were rid of him. The Primate says our Holy Father the Pope hath an adviser—I am sure he could not live a week with such an adviser as mine. Then there is no learning what Father Eustace thinks till you confess your own difficulties —No hint will bring forth his opinion—he is like a miser, who will not unbuckle his purse to bestow a farthing, until the wretch who needs it has owned his excess of po-

verty, and wrung out the boon by importunity. And thus I am dishonoured in the eyes of my religious brethren, who behold me treated like a child which hath no sense of its own—I will bear it no longer!—Brother Bennet,—(a lay brother answered to his call)—tell Father Eustace that I need not his presence."

"I came to say to your reverence, that the holy father is entering even now from the cloisters."

"Be it so," said the Abbot, "he is welcome—remove these things—or rather, place a trencher, the holy father may be a little hungry—yet, no—remove them, for there is no good fellowship in him—Let the stoup of wine remain however, and place another cup."

The lay brother obeyed these contradictory commands in the way he judged most seemly—he removed the carcase of the half-sacked capon, and placed two goblets beside the stoup of Bourdeaux. At the same instant entered Father Eustace.

He was a thin, sharp-faced, slight-made, little man, whose keen grey eyes seemed almost to look through the person to whom he addressed himself. His body was emaciated not only with the fasts which he observed with rigid punctuality, but also by the active and unwearied exercise of his sharp and piercing intellect.

A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the puny body to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.

He turned with conventual reverence to the Lord Abbot; and as they stood together, it was scarce possible to see a more complete difference of form and expression. The good-natured rosy face and laughing eye of the Abbot, which even his present anxiety could not greatly ruffle, was a wonderful contrast to the thin pallid cheek and quick penetrating glance of the Monk, in which an eager and keen spirit glanced through eyes to which it seemed to give supernatural lustre.

The Abbot opened the conversation by motioning to his Monk to take a stool, and inviting to a cup of wine. The courtesy was declined with respect, yet not without a remark, that the vesper-service was past

"For the stomach's sake, brother," said the Abbot, colouring a little—"you know the text."

"It is a dangerous one," answered the Monk, "to handle alone, or at late hours. Cut off from human society, the juice of the grape becomes a perilous companion of solitude, and therefore I shun it."

Abbot Boniface had poured himself out a goblet which might hold about half an English pint; but, either struck with the truth of the observation, or ashamed to act in direct opposition to it, he suffered it to remain untasted before him, and he immediately changed the subject.

"The Primate hath written to us," said he, "to make strict search within our bounds after the heretical persons denounced in

this list, who have withdrawn themselves from the justice which their opinions deserve. It is deemed probable that they will attempt to retire to England by our Borders, and the Primate requireth me to watch with vigilance, and what not."

"Assuredly," said the Monk, "the magistrate should not bear the sword in vain —those be they that turn the world upside down—and doubtless your reverend wisdom will with due diligence second the exertions of the Right Reverend Father in God, being in the peremptory defence of the Holy Church."

"Ay, but how is this to be done?" answered the Abbot; "Saint Mary aid us! The Primate writes to me as if I were a temporal Baron—a man under command, having soldiers under him! He says, send forth—scour the country—guard the passes —Truly these men do not travel as those who would give their lives for nothing— the last who went south passed the dry-march at the Riding-burn with an escort—

of thirty spears, as our reverend brother the Abbot of Kelso did write unto us. How are cowls and scapularies to stop the way?"

"Your Bailiff is accounted a good man-at-arms, holy father," said Eustace; "your vassals are obliged to rise for the defence of the Holy Kirk—it is the tenure on which they hold their lands—if they will not come forth for the Church which gives them bread, let their possessions be given to others."

"We shall not be wanting," said the Abbot, collecting himself with importance, "to do whatever may advantage Holy Kirk—thyself shall hear the charge to our Bailiff and our officials—but here again is our controversy with the warden of the bridge and the Baron of Meigallot—Saint Mary! vexations do so multiply upon the House, and upon the generation, that a man wots not where to turn to! Thou didst say, Father Eustace, thou wouldst look into our evidents touching this free passage for the pilgrims."

"I have looked into the Chartulary of the House, holy father," said Eustace, "and therein I find a written and formal grant of all duties and customs payable at the draw-bridge of Brigton, not only by ecclesiastics of this foundation, but by every pilgrim truly designed to accomplish his vows at this House, to the Abbot Ailford, and the Monks of the House of Saint Mary in Kennaquhair, from that time and for ever. The deed is dated on Saint Bridget's Even, in the year of Redemption, 1137, and bears the sign and seal of the granter, Charles of Meigallot, great-great-grandfather of this Baron, and purports to be granted for the safety of his own soul, and for the weal of the souls of his father and mother, and of all his predecessors and successors, being Barons of Meigallot."

"But he alleges," said the Abbot, "that the bridge-wards have been in possession of these dues, and have rendered them available for more than fifty years—and the Baron threatens violence—meanwhile, the

journey of the pilgrims is interrupted, to the prejudice of their own souls, and the diminution of the revenues of Saint Mary. The Sacristan advised us to put on a boat; but the warden, whom thou knowest to be a godless man, has sworn the devil tear him, but that if they put on a boat on the laird's stream, he will rive her board from board—and then some say we should compound the claim for a small sum in silver." Here the Abbot paused a moment for a reply, but receiving none, he added, " But what thinkest thou, Father Eustace? why art thou silent?"

"Because I am surprised at the question which the Lord Abbot of Saint Mary's asks at the youngest of his brethren."

"Youngest in time of your abode with us, Brother Eustace," said the Abbot, "not youngest in years, or I think in experience—Sub-Prior also of this convent."

"I am astonished," continued Eustace, "that the Abbot of this venerable house should ask of any one, whether he can alienate the patrimony of our holy and di-

vine patroness, or give up to an unconscientious, and perhaps a heretic baron, the rights conferred on this church by his devout progenitor. Popes and councils alike prohibit it—the honour of the living, and the weal of departed souls, alike forbid it —it may not be. To force, if he dare use it, we must surrender; but never by our consent should we see the goods of the church plundered, with as little scruple as he would drive off a herd of English beeves. Rouse yourself, reverend father, and doubt nothing but that the good cause shall prevail. Whet the spiritual sword, and direct it against the wicked who would usurp on our holy rights. Whet the temporal sword if it be necessary, and stir up the courage and zeal of your loyal vassals."

The Abbot sighed deeply. "All this," he said, "is soon spoken by him who hath to act it not; but"——He was interrupted by the entrance of Bennet rather hastily. "The mule on which the Sacristan had set out in the morning had re-

turned," he said, "to the convent stable all over wet, and with the saddle turned round beneath her belly."

"Sancta Maria!" said the Abbot, "our dear brother hath perished from the way:"

"It may not be," said Eustace hastily—"let the bell be tolled—cause the brethren to get torches—alarm the village—hurry down to the river—I myself will be the foremost."

The real Abbot stood astonished and agape, when at once he beheld his office filled, and saw all which he ought to have ordered, going forward at the dictates of the youngest Monk in the convent. But ere the orders of Eustace, which nobody dreamed of disputing, were carried into execution, the necessisty was prevented by the sudden apparition of the Sacristan, whose supposed danger excited all the alarm.

CHAPTER VII.

Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
Cleanse the foul bosom of the perilous stuff
That weighs upon the heart.

Macbeth.

WHAT betwixt cold and fright the afflicted Sacristan stood before his Superior, propped on the friendly arm of the convent miller, drenched with water, and scarce able to utter a syllable.

After various attempts to speak, the first words he uttered were,

"Swim we merrily—the moon shines birght."

"Swim we merrily!" retorted the Abbot indignantly, "a merry night have ye chosen for swimming, and a becoming salutation to your Superior!"

"Our brother is bewildered," said Eustace; "speak, Father Philip, how is it with you?"

"Good luck to your fishing,"—

continued the Sacristan, with a most dolorous attempt at the tune of his strange companion.

"Good luck to your fishing!" repeated the Abbot, still more surprised and displeased; "by my halidome he is drunken with wine, and comes to our presence with his jolly catches in his throat. If bread and water can cure this folly"——

"With your pardon, venerable father," said the Sub-Prior, "of water our brother has had enough; and methinks, the confusion of his eye is rather that of terror, than of aught unbecoming his profession. Where didst thou find him, Hob Miller?"

"An it please your reverence, I did go but to shut the sluice of the mill—and as I was going to shut the sluice, I heard some-

thing groan near to me—but judging it was one of Giles Fletcher's hogs, for so please you, he never shuts his gate, I caught up my lever, and was about—Saint Mary forgive me!—to strike where I heard the sound, when, as the saints would have it, I heard the second groan just like that of a living man. So I called up my knaves, and found the Father Sacristan lying wet and senseless under the wall of our kiln. So soon as we brought him to himself a bit, he prayed to be brought to your reverence, but I doubt me, his wits have gone a bell-wavering by the road. It was but now that he spoke in somewhat better form."

"Well!" said Brother Eustace, "thou hast done well Hob Miller; only begone now, and remember a second time to pause, ere you strike in the dark."

"Please your reverence, it shall be a lesson to me," said the miller; "not to mistake a holy man for a hog again, so long as I live." And making a bow with profound humility, the miller withdrew.

"And now that this churl is gone, Father Philip," said Eustace, "wilt thou tell our venerable Superior what ails thee? art thou *vino gravatus*, man? if so, we will have thee to thy cell."

"Water! water! not wine," muttered the exhausted Sacristan.

"Nay," said the Monk, "if that be thy complaint, wine may perhaps cure thee;" and he reached him a cup, which the patient drank off to his great benefit.

"And now," said the Abbot, "let his garments be changed, or rather let him be carried to the infirmary; for it will prejudice our health, should we hear his narrative while he stands there, steaming like a rising hoar-frost."

"I will hear his adventure," said Eustace, "and report it to your reverence." And, accordingly, he attended the Sacristan to his cell. In about half an hour he returned to the Abbot.

"How is it with Father Philip?" said

the Abbot; "and through what came he into such a state?"

"He comes from Glendearg, reverend sir," said Eustace; "and for the rest, he telleth such a legend, as has not been heard in this Monastery for many a long day." He then gave the Abbot the outlines of the Sacristan's adventures in the homeward journey, and added, that for some time he was inclined to think his brain was infirm, seeing he had sung, laughed, and wept, all inthe same breath.

"A wonderful thing it is to us," said the Abbot; "that Satan has been permitted to put forth his hand thus far on one of our sacred brethren."

"True," said Father Eustace; "but for every text there is a paraphrase; and I have my suspicions, that if the drenching of Father Philip cometh of the Evil One, yet it may not have been altogether without his own personal fault."

"How!" said the Father Abbot; "I will

not believe that thou makest doubt that Satan, in former days, hath been permitted to afflict saints and holy men, even as he afflicted the pious Job?"

"God forbid I should make question of it," said the Monk, crossing himself; "yet, where there is an exposition of the Sacristan's tale, which is less than miraculous, I hold it safe to consider it at least, if not to abide by it. Now, this Hob the Miller hath a buxom daughter. Suppose, I say only suppose, that our Sacristan met her at the ford on her return from her uncle's on the other side, for there she hath this evening been—suppose, that, in courtesy, and to save her stripping hose and shoon, the Sacristan brought her across behind him—suppose he carried his familiarities farther than the maiden was willing to admit; and we may easily suppose, farther, that this wetting was the result of it."

"And this legend invented to deceive us," said the Superior, reddening with wrath; "but most strictly shall it be sifted

and enquired into ; it is not upon us that Father Philip must hope to pass the result of his own evil practices for doings of Satan. To-morrow cite the wench to appear before us—we will examine, and we will punish."

"Under your Reverence's favour," said Eustace, "that were but poor policy. As things now stand with us, the heretics catch hold of each flying report which tends to the scandal of our clergy. We must abate the evil, not only by strengthening discipline, but also by suppressing and stifling the voice of scandal. If my conjectures are true, the miller's daughter will be silent for her own sake; and your Reverence's authority may also impose silence on her father, and on the Sacristan. If he is again found to afford room for throwing dishonour on his order, he can be punished with severity, but at the same time with secrecy. For what say the Decretals? *Facinora ostendi dum punientur, flagitia autem abscondi debent.*"

A sentence of Latin, as Eustace had be-

fore observed, had often much influence on the Abbot, because he understood it not fluently, and was ashamed to acknowledge his ignorance. On these terms they parted for the night.

The next day, Abbot Boniface strictly interrogated Philip on the real cause of his disaster of the previous night. But the Sacristan stood firm to his story; nor was he found to vary from any point of it, although the answers he returned were in some degree incoherent, owing to his intermingling with them ever and anon snatches of the strange damsel's song, which had made such deep impression on his imagination, that he could not prevent himself from imitating it repeatedly in the course of his examination. The Abbot had compassion with the Sacristan's involuntary frailty, to which something supernatural seemed annexed, and finally became of opinion, that Father Eustace's more natural explanation was rather plausible than just. And indeed, although we have recorded

the adventure as we find it written down, we cannot forbear to add that there was a schism on the subject in the Convent, and that several of the brethren pretended to have good reason for thinking that the black-eyed miller's daughter was at the bottom of the affair after all. Whichever way it might be interpreted, all agreed that it had too ludicrous a sound to be permitted to get abroad, and therefore the Sacristan was charged on his vow of obedience to say no more of his ducking; an injunction which, having once eased his mind by telling his story, it may be well conjectured that he joyfully obeyed.

The attention of Father Eustace was much less forcibly arrested by the marvellous tale of the Sacristan's danger, and his escape, than by the mention of the volume which he had brought with him from the Tower of Glendearg. A copy of the Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, had found its way even into the proper territory of the

church, and had been found in one of the most hidden and sequestered recesses of the Halidome of Saint Mary's.

He anxiously requested to see the volume. In this the Sacristan was unable to gratify him, for he had lost it, as far as he recollected, when the supernatural being, as he conceived her to be, took her departure from him. Father Eustace went down to the spot in person, and searched all around it, in hopes of recovering the volume in question; but his labour was in vain. He returned to the Abbot, and reported that it must have fallen into the river or the mill-stream; "for I will hardly believe," he said, "that Father Philip's musical friend would fly off with a copy of the Holy Scriptures."

"Being," said the Abbot, "as it is, a heretical translation, it may be thought that Satan may have power over it."

"Ay!" said Father Eustace, "it is indeed his chiefest magazine of artillery, when he inspireth presumptuous and daring

men to set forth their own opinions and expositions of Holy Writ. But though thus abused, the Scriptures are the source of our salvation, and are no more to be reckoned unholy, because of these rash mens' proceedings, than a powerful medicine is to be contemned, or held poisonous, because bold and evil leeches have employed it to the prejudice of their patients. With the permission of your reverence, I would that this matter were looked into more closely. I will myself visit the Tower of Glendearg ere I am many hours older, and we will see if any spectre or white woman of the wild will venture to interrupt my journey or return. Have I your reverend permission and your blessing?" he added, but in a tone that appeared to set no great store by either.

"Thou hast both, my brother," said the Abbot; but no sooner had Eustace left the apartment, than Boniface could not help breaking on the willing ear of the Sacris-

tan his sincere wish, that any spirit, black, white, or grey, would read the adviser such a lesson, as to cure him of his presumption in esteeming himself wiser than the whole community.

"I wish him no worse lesson," said the Sacristan, "than to go swimming merrily down the river with a ghost behind, and Kelpie's night-crows and mud-eels all waiting to have a snatch at him.

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright!
Good luck to your fishing, whom watch you to-night?"

"Brother Philip," said the Abbot, "we exhort thee to say thy prayers, compose thyself, and banish that foolish chaunt from thy mind;—it is but a deception of the devil's."

"I will essay, reverend father," said the Sacristan, "but the tune hangs by my memory like a burr in a beggar's rags; it mingles with the Psalter—the very bells of the convent seem to repeat the words, and jin-

gle to the tune; and were you to put me to death at this very moment, it is my belief I should die singing it—'Now swim we merrily'—it is as it were a spell upon me."

He then again began to warble

"Good luck to your fishing."

And checking himself in the strain with difficulty, he exclaimed, "It is too certain —I am but a lost priest! Swim we merrily—I will sing it at the very mass—Woe is me! I shall sing all the remainder of my life, and yet never be able to change the tune!"

The honest Abbot replied, "he knew many a good fellow in the same condition;" and concluded the remark with "ho! ho! ho!" for his reverence, as the reader may partly have observed, was one of those dull folks who love a quiet joke.

The Sacristan, well acquainted with his Superior's humour, endeavoured to join in

the laugh, but his unfortunate canticle came again across his imagination, and interrupted the hilarity of his customary echo.

"By the rood, Brother Philip," said the Abbot much moved, "you become altogether intolerable! and I am convinced that such a spell could not subsist over a person of religion, and in a religious house, unless he were under mortal sin. Wherefore, say the seven penitentiary psalms—make diligent use of thy scourge and hair-cloth—refrain for three days from all food, save bread and water—I myself will shrive thee, and we will see if this singing devil may be driven out of thee; at least I think Father Eustace himself could devise no better exorcism."

The Sacristan sighed deeply, but knew remonstrance was vain. He retired therefore to his cell, to try how far psalmody might be able to drive off the sounds of the syren tune which haunted his memory.

Meanwhile, Father Eustace proceeded to

the draw-bridge, in his way to the lonely valley of Glendearg. In a brief conversation with the churlish warder, he had the address to render him more tractable in the controversy betwixt him and the convent. He reminded him that his father had been a vassal under the community; that his brother was childless; and that their possession would revert to the church on his death, and might be either granted to himself the warder, or to some greater favourite of the Abbot, as matters chanced to stand betwixt them at the time. The Sub-Prior suggested to him also, the necessary connection of interests betwixt the Monastery and the office which this man enjoyed. He listened with temper to his rude and churlish answers; and by keeping his own interest firm pitched in his view, he had the satisfaction to find that Peter gradually softened his tone, and consented to let every pilgrim who travelled upon foot pass free of exaction until Pentecost next; they who travelled on horseback or otherwise, consent-

ing to pay the ordinary custom. Having thus accommodated a matter in which the weal of the convent was so deeply interested, Father Eustace proceeded on his journey.

CHAPTER VIII.

Nay, dally not with time, the wise man's treasure,
Though fools are lavish on't—the fatal Fisher
Hooks souls, while we waste moments.

Old Play.

A November mist overspread the little valley, up which slowly but steadily rode the Monk Eustace. He was not insensible to the feeling of melancholy inspired by the scene and by the season. The stream seemed to murmur with a deep and oppressed note, as if bewailing the departure of Autumn. Among the scattered copses which here and there fringed its banks, the oak-trees only retained that pallid green that precedes their russet hue. The leaves of the willows were most of them stripped from

the branches, lay rustling at each breath, and disturbed by every step of the mule; while the foliage of other trees, totally withered, kept still precarious possession of the boughs, waiting the first wind to strew them.

The Monk dropped into the natural train of pensive thought which these autumnal emblems of mortal hopes are peculiarly calculated to inspire. "There," he said, looking at the leaves which lay strewed around, "lie the hopes of early youth, first formed that they may soonest wither, and loveliest in spring to become most contemptible in winter; but you, ye lingerers," added he, looking to a knot of beeches which still bore their withered leaves, "you are the proud plans of adventurous manhood, formed later, and still clinging to the mind of age, although it acknowledges their inanity! None lasts—none endures, save the foliage of the hardy oak, which only begins to shew itself when that of the rest of the forest has enjoyed half its existence. A pale and decayed hue is all

it possesses, but still it retains that symptom of vitality to the last.—So be it with Father Eustace! The fairy hopes of my youth I have trodden under foot like those neglected rustlers—to the prouder dreams of my manhood I look back as to lofty chimeras, of which the pith and essence has long since faded; but my religious vows, the faithful profession which I have made in my maturer age, shall retain life while aught of Eustace lives. Dangerous it may be—feeble it must be—yet live it shall, the proud determination to serve the church of which I am a member, and to combat the heresies by which she is assailed." Thus spoke, at least thus thought, a man zealous according to his imperfect knowledge, confounding the vital interests of Christianity with the extravagant and usurped claims of the Church of Rome, and defending his cause with ardour worthy of a better.

While moving onward in this contemplative mood, he could not help thinking more than once, that he saw in his path

the form of a female dressed in white, who appeared in the attitude of lamentation. But the impression was only momentary, and whenever he looked steadily to the point where he conceived the figure appeared, it always proved that he had mistaken some natural object, a white crag, or the trunk of a decayed birch tree with its silver bark, for the appearance in question.

Father Eustace had dwelt too long in Rome to partake the superstitious feelings of the more ignorant Scottish clergy; yet he certainly thought it extraordinary, that so strong an impression should have been made on his mind by the legend of the Sacristan. "It is strange," he said to himself, "that this story, which doubtless was the invention of Brother Philip to cover his own impropriety of conduct, should run so much in my head and disturb my more serious thoughts —I am wont, I think, to have more command upon my senses. I will repeat my prayers, and banish such folly from my recollection."

The Monk accordingly began with devotion to tell his beads, according to the prescribed rule of his order, and was not again disturbed by any wanderings of the imagination, until he found himself beneath the little fortalice of Glendearg.

Dame Glendinning, who stood at the gate, set up a shout of surprise and joy at seeing the good father. "Martin," she said, "Jasper, where be a' the folk?—help the right reverend Sub-Prior to dismount, and take his mule from him—O father! God has sent you in our need—I was just going to send man and horse to the Convent, though I ought to be ashamed to give so much trouble to your reverences."

"Our trouble matters not, good dame," said Father Eustace; "in what can I pleasure you? I came hither to visit the Lady of Avenel."

"Well-a-day!" said Dame Alice, "and it was on her part that I had the boldness to think of summoning you, for the good lady will never be able to wear over the

day!—Would it please you to go to her chamber?"

"Hath she not been shriven by Father Philip?" said the Monk.

"Shriven she was," said the Dame of Glendearg, "and by Father Philip, as your reverence truly says—but—but I wish it may have been a clean shrift—Methought Father Philip looked but moody upon it—and there was a book which he took away with him, that"——She paused as if unwilling to proceed.

"Speak out, Dame Glendinning," said the Father; "with us it is your duty to have no secrets."

"Nay, if it please your reverence, it is not that I would keep any thing from your reverence's knowledge, but I fear I should prejudice the lady in your opinion; for she is an excellent lady—months and years has she dwelt in this tower, and none more exemplary than she; but this matter, doubtless, she will explain it herself to your reverence."

"I desire first to know it from you, Dame Glendinning," said the Monk; "and I again repeat, it is your duty to tell it to me."

"This book, if it please your reverence, which Father Philip removed from Glendearg, was this morning returned to us in a strange manner," said the good widow.

"Returned!" said the Monk; "How mean you?"

"I mean," answered Dame Glendinning, "that it was brought back to the town of Glendearg, the saints best know how—that same book which Father Philip carried with him but yesterday. Old Martin, that is my tasker and the lady's servant, was driving out the cows to the pasture—for we have three good milk cows, reverend father, blessed be Saint Waldave, and thanks to the holy Monastery"——

The Monk groaned with impatience; but he remembered that a woman of the good dame's condition was like a top, which, if you let it spin on untouched, must at last come to a pause; but, if you interrupt it by flogging,

there is no end to its gyrations. "But to speak no more of the cows, your reverence, though they are likely cattle as ever were tied to a stake, the tasker was driving them out, and the lads, that is my Halbert and my Edward, that your reverence has seen at church on holidays, and especially Halbert,—for you patted him on the head and gave him a broach of Saint Cuthbert, which he wears in his bonnet,—and little Mary Avenel, that is the lady's daughter, they ran all after the cattle, and began to play up and down the pasture as young-folk will, your reverence. And at length they lost sight of Martin and the cows; and they began to run up a little cleuch which we call *Corinan shian*, where there is a wee bit stripe of a burn, and they saw there—Good guide us!—a white woman sitting on the burn-side wringing her hands—so the bairns were frighted to see a strange woman sitting there, all but Halbert, who will be sixteen come Whitsuntide; and, besides, he never feared onything—and when they

went up to her—behold she was passed away!"

"For shame, good woman!" said Father Eustace; "a woman of your sense listen to a tale so idle!—the young folks told you a lie, and that was all."

"Nay, sir, it was more than that," said the old dame; "for, besides that they never told me a lie in their lives, I must warn you that on the very ground where the White Woman was sitting, they found the Lady of Avenel's book, and brought it with them to the tower."

"That is worthy of mark at least," said the Monk. "Know you no other copy of this volume within these bounds?"

"None, your reverence," returned Elspeth; "why should there?—no one could read it were there twenty."

"Then you are sure it is the very same volume which you gave to Father Philip," said the Monk.

"As sure as that I now speak with your reverence."

"It is most singular!" said the Monk;

and he walked across the room in a musing posture.

"I have been upon nettles to hear what your reverence would say," continued Dame Glendinning, "respecting this matter—There is nothing I would not do for the Lady of Avenel and her family, and that has been proved, and for her servants to boot, both Martin and Tibb, although Tibb is not so civil sometimes as altogether I have a right to expect; but I cannot think it beseeming to have angels, or ghosts, or fairies, or the like, waiting upon a leddy when she is in another woman's house, in respect it is no ways creditable. Onything she had to do was always done to her hand, without costing her either pains or pence, as a country body says; and besides the discredit, I cannot but think that there is no safety in having such unchancy creatures about ane. But I have tied red thread round the bairns's throats, (so her fondness still called them,) and given ilk ane of them a riding wand of rowan

tree, for ye sewing up a slip of witch-elm into their doublets; and I wish to know of your reverence if there be ony thing mair that a lone woman can do in the matter of ghosts and fairies?—Be here! that I should have named their unlucky names twice ower!"

"Dame Glendinning," answered the Monk, somewhat abruptly, when the good woman had finished her narrative, "I pray you, do you know the miller's daughter?"

"Did I know Kate Happer?" replied the widow; "as weel as the beggar knows his dish—a canty quean was Kate, and a special cummer of my ain may be twenty years syne."

"She cannot be the wench I mean," said Father Eustace; "she after whom I enquire is scarce fifteen, a black-eyed girl—you may have seen her at the kirk."

"Your reverence must be in the right; and she is my cummer's niece, doubtless, that you are pleased to speak of: But I thank God I have always been too duteous in attention to the mass, to know whether

young wenches have black eyes or green ones."

The good father had so much of the world about him, that he was unable to avoid smiling, when the dame boasted her absolute resistance to a temptation, which was not quite so liable to beset her as those of the other sex.

"Perhaps, then," he said, "you know her usual dress, Dame Glendinning?"

"Ay, ay, Father," answered the dame readily enough, "a white kirtle the wench wears, to hide the dust of the mill no doubt—and a blue hood, that might weel be spared, for pridefulness."

"Then, may it not be she," said the Father, "who has brought back this book, and stepped out of the way when the children came near her?"

The dame paused—was unwilling to combat the solution suggested by the Monk—but was at a loss to conceive why the lass of the mill should come so far from home into so wild a corner, merely to leave an old

book with three children, from whose observation she wished to conceal herself. Above all, she could not understand why, since she had acquaintances of the family, and since the Dame Glendinning had always paid her multure and knaveship duly, the said lass of the mill had not come in to rest herself and eat a morsel, and tell her the current news of the water.

These very objections satisfied the Monk that his conjectures were right. "Dame," he said, "you must be cautious in what you say. This is an instance—I would it were the sole one—of the power of the Enemy in these days. The matter must be sifted with a curious and careful hand."

"Indeed," said Elspeth, trying to catch and chime in with the ideas of the Sub-Prior, "I have often thought the miller's folks at the Monastery-mill were far over careless in sifting our melder, and in bolting it too—some folks say they will not stick at whiles to put in a handful of ashes amongst Christian folk's corn-meal."

"That shall be looked after also, dame," said the Sub-Prior, not displeased to see that the good old woman went off on a false scent; "and now, by your leave, I will see this lady—do you go before, and prepare her to see me."

Dame Glendinning left the lower apartment accordingly, which the Monk paced in anxious reflection, considering how he might best discharge, with humanity as well as with effect, the important duty incumbent on him. He resolved to approach the bed-side of the sick person with reprimands, mitigated only by a feeling for her weak condition—he determined, in case of her reply, to which late examples of hardened heretics might encourage her, to be prepared with answers to their customary scruples. High fraught, also, with zeal against her unauthorized intrusion into the priestly function, by study of the Sacred Scriptures, he imagined to himself the answers which one of the modern school of heresy might return to him—the victorious refutation which

should lay the disputant prostrate at the Confessor's mercy—and the healing, yet awful exhortation, which, under pain of refusing the last consolations of religion, he designed to make to the penitent, conjuring her, as she loved her own soul's welfare, to disclose to him what she knew of the dark mystery of iniquity, by which heresies were introduced into the most secluded spots of the very patrimony of the church herself—what agents they had who could thus glide, as it were unseen, from place to place, bring back the volume which the church had interdicted to the spots from which they had been removed under her express auspices; and who, by encouraging the daring and profane thirst after knowledge forbidden and useless to the laity, had encouraged the fisher of souls to use with effect his old bait of ambition and vain glory.

Much of this premeditated disputation escaped the good father, when Elspeth returned, her tears flowing faster than her

apron could dry them, and made him a signal to follow her. "How," said the Monk, "is she then so near her end?—nay, the church must not break or bruise, when comfort is yet possible;" and, forgetting his polemics, the good Sub-Prior hastened to the little apartment, where, on the wretched bed which she had occupied since her misfortunes had drawn her to the Tower of Glendearg, the widow of Walter Avenel had rendered up her spirit to her Creator. "My God!" said the Sub-Prior, "and has my unfortunate dallying suffered her to depart without the Church's consolation? Look to her, dame," he exclaimed with eager impatience; "is there not yet a sparkle of the life left?—may she not be recalled—recalled but for a moment?—Oh! would that she could express, but by the most imperfect word—but by the most feeble motion, her acquiescence in the needful task of penitential prayer! Does she not breathe?—Art thou sure she doth not?"

"She will never breathe more," said the matron. "O! the poor fatherless girl—now motherless also—O the kind companion I have had these many years, that I shall never see again! But she is in Heaven for certain, if ever woman went there; for a woman of better life"——

"Woe to me," said the good Monk, "if indeed she went not hence in good assurance—woe to the reckless shepherd, who suffered the wolf to carry a choice one from the flock, while he busied himself with trimming his sling and his staff to give the monster battle! O! if, in the long Hereafter, aught but weal should that poor spirit share, what has my delay cost?—the value of an immortal soul!"

He then approached the body, full of the deep remorse natural to a good man of his persuasion, who devoutly believed the doctrines of the Catholic Church. "Ay," said he, gazing on the pallid corpse, from which the spirit had parted so placidly as to leave a smile upon the thin blue

lips, which had been so long wasted by decay that they had parted with the last breath of animation without the slightest convulsive tremor—"Ay," said Father Eustace, "there lies the faded tree, and, as it fell, so it lies—awful thought for me, should my neglect have left it to descend in an evil direction." He then again and again conjured Dame Glendinning to tell him what she knew of the demeanour and ordinary walk of the deceased.

All tended to the high honour of the deceased lady; for her companion, who admired her sufficiently while alive, notwithstanding some trifling points of jealousy, now idolized her after her death, and could think of no attribute of praise with which she did not adorn her memory.

Indeed, the Lady of Avenel, however she might privately doubt some of the doctrines announced by the Church of Rome, and although she had probably tacitly appealed from that corrupted system of Christianity to the volume on which Christianity

itself is founded, had nevertheless been regular in her attendance on the worship of the church, not, perhaps, extending her scruples so far as to break off communion. Such indeed was the first sentiment of the earlier reformers, who seem to have studied, for a time at least, to avoid a schism, until the violence of the Pope rendered it unavoidable.

Father Eustace, on the present occasion, listened with eagerness to every thing which could lead to assure him of the lady's orthodoxy in the main points of belief; for his conscience reproached him sorely, that, instead of protracting conversation with the Dame of Glendearg, he ought instantly to have hastened where his presence was so necessary. "If," he said, addressing the dead body, "thou art yet free from the utmost penalty due to the followers of false doctrine—if thou dost but suffer for a time, to expiate faults done in the body, but partaking of mortal frailty more than of deadly sin, fear not that thy abode shall be long

in the penal regions to which thou mayest be doomed—if vigils—if masses—if penance—if maceration of my body, till it resembles that extenuated form which the soul hath abandoned, may assure thy deliverance. The Holy Church—the godly foundation—our blessed Patroness herself, shall intercede for one whose errors were counterbalanced by so many virtues.—Leave me, dame—here, and by her bedside, will I perform those duties which this piteous case demands!"

Elspeth left the Monk, who employed himself in fervent and sincere, though erroneous prayers, for the weal of the departed spirit. For an hour he remained in the apartment of death, and then returned to the hall, where he found the still weeping friend of the deceased.

But it would be injustice to Mrs Elspeth Glendinning's hospitality, if we suppose her to have been weeping during this long interval, or rather, if we suppose her so entirely absorbed by the tribute of sorrow

which she paid frankly and plentifully to her deceased friend, as to be incapable of attending to the rights of hospitality due to the holy visitor—who was confessor at once, and Sub-Prior—mighty in all religious and secular considerations, so far as the vassals of the Monastery were interested.

Her barley-bread had been toasted—her choicest cask of home-brewed ale had been broached—her best butter had been placed on the hall-table, along with her most savoury ham and her choicest cheese, ere she abandoned herself to the extremity of sorrow; and it was not till she had arranged her little repast neatly on the board, that she sat down in the chimney corner, threw her checked apron over her head, and gave way to the current of tears and sobs. In this there was no grimace or affectation. The good dame held the honours of her house to be as essential a duty, especially when a Monk was her visitant, as any other pressing call upon her conscience; nor until these were suitably attended to did she find

herself at liberty to indulge her sorrow for her departed friend.

When she was conscious of the Sub-Prior's presence, she rose with the same attention to his reception; but he declined all the offers of hospitality with which she endeavoured to tempt him. Not her butter, as yellow as gold, and the best, she assured him, that was made in the patrimony of Saint Mary—not the barley-scones, which "the departed saint, God sain her! used to say were so good"—not the ale, nor any other cates which poor Elspeth's stores afforded, could prevail on the Sub Prior to break his fast.

"This day," he said, "I must not taste food until the sun go down, happy if, in so doing, I can expiate my own negligence—happier still, if my sufferings of this trifling nature, undertaken in pure faith and singleness of heart, may benefit the soul of the deceased. Yet, dame," he added, "I may not so far forget the living in my cares for the dead, as to leave be-

hind me that book, which is to the ignorant what, to our first parents, the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil unhappily proved—excellent indeed in itself, but fatal, because used by those to whom it is prohibited."

"O, blithely, reverend father," said the widow of Simon Glendinning, "will I give you the book, if so be I can wile it from the bairns; and indeed, poor things, as the case stands with them even now, you might take the heart out of their bodies, and they never find it out, they are sae begrutten."*

"Give them this missal instead, good dame," said the Father, drawing from his pocket one which was curiously illuminated with paintings, "and I will come myself, or send some one at a fitting time, and teach them the meaning of these pictures."

"The bonnie images," said Dame Glendinning, forgetting for an instant her grief in her admiration "and weel I wot," add-

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* Begrutten,—over-weeped.

ed she, "it is another sort of a book than the poor Lady of Avenel's; and blessed might we have been this day, if your reverence had found the way up the glen, instead of Father Philip, though the Sacristan is a powerful man too, and speaks as if he would gar the house fly abroad, save that the walls are gay thick. Simon's forebears (may he and they be blessed!) took care of that."

The Monk ordered his mule, and was about to take his leave; and the good dame was still delaying him with questions about the funeral, when a horseman, armed and accoutred, rode into the little court-yard which surrounded the Keep.

CHAPTER IX

For since they rode among our doors
With splent on spauld and rusty spurs,
There grows no fruit into our furs;
Thus said John Up-on-land.
Bannatyne MS.

THE Scottish laws, which were as wisely and judiciously made as they were carelessly and ineffectually executed, had in vain endeavoured to restrain the damage done to agriculture, by the chiefs and landed proprietors retaining in their service what were called Jack-men, from the *jack*, or doublet quilted with iron, which they wore as defensive armour. These military retainers conducted themselves with great insolence towards the industrious part of the community—lived in a great measure by plunder, and were ready to execute any com

mands of their master, however unlawful. In adopting this mode of life, men resigned the quiet hopes and regular labours of industry, for an unsettled, precarious, and dangerous trade, which yet had such charms for those who once became accustomed to it, that they became incapable of following any other. Hence the complaint of John Upland, a fictitious character, representing a countryman, into whose mouth the poets of the day put their general satires upon men and manners:

> They ride about in such a rage,
> By forest, frith and field,
> With buckler, bow, and brand.
> Lo! where they ride out through the rye!
> The Devil mot save the company,
> Quoth John Up-on-land.

Christie of the Clinthill, the horseman who now arrived at the little tower of Glendearg, was one of the hopeful company of whom the poet complains, as was indicated by his "*splent on spauld,*" (*iron-plates on his*

shoulder,) his rusted spurs, and his long lance. An iron scull-cap, none of the brightest, bore for distinction a sprig of the holly, which was Avenel's badge. A long two-edged straight sword, having a handle made of polished oak, hung down by his side. The meagre condition of his horse, and the wild and emaciated look of the rider, shewed their occupation could not be accounted an easy or a thriving one. He saluted Dame Glendinning with little courtesy, and the Monk with less; for the growing disrespect to the religious orders had not failed to extend itself among a class of men of such disorderly habits, although it may be supposed they were altogether indifferent alike to the new or the ancient doctrines.

"So, our lady is dead, Dame Glendinning," said the jack-man; "my master sent you even now a fat bullock for her mart—it may serve for her funeral. I have left him in the upper cleuch, as he is some-

what ken-speckle,* and is marked both with cut and birn—the sooner the skin is off, and he is in saultfat, the less like you are to have trouble, you understand me. Let me have a peck of corn for my horse, and beef and beer for myself, for I must go on to the Monastery—though I think this Monk here might do mine errand."

"Thine errand, rude man," said the Sub-Prior, knitting his brows——

"For God's sake!" said poor Dame Glendinning, terrified at the idea of a quarrel between them,—"O Christie! it is the Sub Prior—O reverend sir, it is Christie of the Clinthill, the laird's chief jackman; ye know that little havings can be expected from the like o' them."

"Are you a retainer of the laird of Avenel?" said the Monk, addressing himself to the horseman; "and do you speak thus rudely to a brother of Saint Mary's, to whom thy master is so much beholden?"

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* *Ken-speckle*—that which is easily recognised by the eye.

" He means to be yet more beholden to your house, Sir Monk," answered the fellow; " for hearing his sister-in law, the widow of Walter of Avenel, was on her death-bed, he sent me to say to the Father Abbot and the brethren, that he will hold the funeral-feast at their convent, and invites himself thereto with a score of horse, and some friends, to abide there for three days and three nights,—having horse-meat and men's meat at the charge of the community; of which his intention he sends due notice, that fitting preparation may be timeously made."

" Friend," said the Sub-Prior, " believe not that I will do to the Father Abbot the indignity of delivering such an errand.—Think'st thou the goods of the church were bestowed upon her by holy princes and pious nobles, now dead and gone, to be consumed in revelry by every profligate layman who numbers in his train more followers than he can support by honest means, or by his own incomings? Tell thy master, from the

Sub-Prior of Saint Mary's, that the Primate hath issued his commands to us that we submit no longer to this compulsory exaction of hospitality on slight or false pretences. Our lands and goods were given to relieve pilgrims and pious persons, not to feast bands of rude soldiers."

"This to me!" said the rude spear-man, "this to me and to my master?—Look to yourself then, Sir Priest, and try if *Ave* and *Credo* will keep bullocks from wandering, and hay-stacks from burning."

"Doest thou menace the holy Church's patrimony with waste and fire-raising, "said the Sub Prior, "and that in the face of the sun? I call on all who hear me to bear witness to the words this ruffian has spoken. Remember how the Lord James drowned such as you by scores in the black pool at Jeddart.—To him and to the Primate will I complain." The soldier shifted the position of his lance, and brought it down to a level with the Monk's body.

Dame Glendinning began to shriek for

assistance. "Tibb Tacket! Martin! where be ye all?—Christie, for the love of God, consider he is a man of holy kirk."

"I care not for his spear," said the Sub-Prior; "if I am slain in defending the rights and privileges of my community, the Primate will know how to take vengeance."

"Let him look to himself," said Christie, but at the same time depositing his lance against the wall of the tower; "if the Fife men spoke true who came hither with the Governor in the last raid, Norman Leslie has him at feud, and is like to set him hard. We know Norman a true blood-hound, who will never quit the slot. But I had no design to offend the holy father," he added, thinking perhaps he had gone a little too far; "I am a rude man, bred to lance and stirrup, and not used to deal with book-learned men and priests; and I am willing to ask his forgiveness and his blessing, if I have said aught amiss."

"For God's sake, your reverence," said the widow of Glendearg apart to the Sub-

Prior, "bestow on him your forgiveness—how shall we poor folks sleep in security in the dark nights, if the Convent is at feud with such men as he is?"

"You are right, dame," said the Sub-Prior, "your safety should, and must be in the first instance consulted.—Soldier, I forgive thee, and may God bless thee and send thee honesty."

Christie of the Clinthill made an unwilling inclination with his head, and muttered apart, "that is as much as to say, God send thee starvation.—But now to my master's demand, Sir Priest? What answer am I to return?"

"That the body of the widow of Walter of Avenel," answered the Father, "shall be interred as becomes her rank, and in the tomb of her valiant husband. For your master's proffered visit of three days, with such a company and retinue, I have no authority to reply to it; you must intimate your Chief's purpose to the Reverend Lord Abbot."

"That will cost me a farther ride," said the man, "but it is all in the day's work. —How now, my lad," said he to Halbert, who was handling the long lance which he had laid aside; "how do you like such a play-thing?—will you go with me and be a moss-trooper?"

"The Saints in their mercy forbid!' said the poor mother; and then, afraid of having displeased Christie by the vivacity of her exclamation, she followed it up by explaining, that since Simon's death she could not look on a spear or a bow, or any implement of destruction, without trembling.

"Pshaw!" answered Christie, "thou should'st take another husband, dame, and drive such follies out of thy thoughts—what say'st thou to such a strapping lad as I? Why, this old tower of thine is fencible enough, and there is no want of cleughs, and craggs, and bogs, and thickets, if one was set hard; a man might bide here and keep his half-score of lads, and as many geldings, and live on what he could lay his hand on, and be kind to thee, old wench."

"Alas! Master Christie, that you would talk to a lone woman in such a fashion, and death in the house besides?"

"Lone woman!—why, that is the very reason thou should'st take a mate. Thy old friend is dead—why good—chuse thou another of somewhat tougher frame, and that will not die of the pip like a young chicken. —Better still—Come, dame, let me have something to eat, and we will talk more of this."

Dame Elspeth, though she well knew the man's character, which in fact she both disliked and feared, could not help simpering at the personal address which he thought proper to make to her. She whispered to the Sub-Prior, "ony thing just to keep him quiet," and went into the tower to set before the soldier the food he desired, trusting, betwixt good cheer and the power of her own charms, to keep Christie of the Clinthill so well amused, that the altercation betwixt him and the holy father should not be renewed.

The Sub-Prior was equally unwilling to hazard any unnecessary rupture between the community and such a person as Julian of Avenel. He was sensible that moderation, as well as firmness, was necessary to support the tottering cause of the Church of Rome; and that, contrary to the former ages, the quarrels betwixt the clergy and laity had, in the present, usually terminated to the advantage of the latter. He resolved, therefore, to avoid further strife by withdrawing, but failed not, in the first place, to possess himself of the volume which the Sacristan had carried off the evening before, and which had been returned to the glen in such a marvellous manner.

Edward, the younger of Dame Elspeth's boys, made great objections to the book being removed, in which Mary would probably have joined, but that she was now in her little sleeping chamber with Tibb, who was exerting her simple skill to console the young lady for her mother's death. But the younger Glendinning stood up in

defence of her property, and with a positiveness which had hitherto made no part of his character, declared, that now the kind lady was dead, the book was Mary's, and no one but Mary should have it.

"But if it is not a fit book for Mary to read, my dear boy," said the Father gently; "you would not wish it to remain with her."

"The lady read it," answered the young champion of property; "and so it could not be wrong—it shall not be taken away—I wonder where Halbert is?—listening to the bravading tales of gay Christie, I reckon—he is always wishing for fighting, and now he is out of the way."

"Why, Edward, you would not fight with me, who am both a priest and an old man?"

"If you were as good a priest as the Pope, and as old as the hills to boot, you shall not carry away Mary's book without her leave. I will do battle for it."

"But see you, my love," said the Monk, amused with the resolute friendship mani-

fested by the boy, "I do not take it; I only borrow it; and I leave in its place my own gay missal, as a pledge I will bring it again."

Edward opened the missal with eager curiosity, and glanced at the pictures with which it was illustrated. "Saint George and the dragon—Halbert will like that; and Saint Michael brandishing his sword over the head of the Wicked One—and that will do for Halbert too. And see the Saint John leading his lamb in the wilderness, with his little cross made of reeds, and his scrip and staff—that shall be my favourite; and where shall we find one for poor Mary? —here is a beautiful woman weeping and lamenting herself."

"That is Saint Mary Magdalen repenting of her sins, my dear boy," said the Father.

"That will not suit *our* Mary; for she commits no faults, and is never angry with us, but when we do something wrong."

"Then," said the Father, "I will shew you a Mary, who will protect her and you,

and all good children. See how fairly she is represented with her gown covered with golden stars."

The boy was lost in wonder at the portrait of the Virgin, which the Sub-Prior turned up to him.

"This," he said, "is really like our sweet Mary; and I think I will let you take away the black book, that has no such goodly shews in it, and leave this for Mary instead. But you must promise to bring back the book, good Father—for now I think upon it, Mary may like that best which was her mother's."

"I will certainly return," said the Monk, evading his answer, "and perhaps I may teach you to write and read such beautiful letters as you see there written, and to paint them blue, green, and yellow, and to blazon them with gold."

"Ay, and to make such figures as these blessed Saints, and especially these two Marys?" said the boy.

"With their blessing," said the Sub-

Prior, "I can teach you that art too, so far as I am myself capable of shewing, and you of learning it."

"Then," said Edward, "will I paint Mary's picture—and remember you are to bring back the black book; that you must promise me."

The Sub-Prior, anxious to get rid of the boy's pertinacity, and to set forward on his return to the convent, without having any farther interview with Christie the galloper, answered by giving the promise Edward required, mounted his mule, and set forth on his return homeward.

The November day was well spent ere the Sub-Prior resumed his journey; for the difficulty of the road, and the various delays which he had met with at the tower, had detained him longer than he proposed. A chill easterly wind was sighing among the withered leaves, and stripping them from the hold they had yet retained on the parent trees.

"Even so," said the Monk, "our pros-

pects in this vale of time grow more disconsolate as the stream of years passes on. Little have I gained by my journey, saving the certainty that heresy is busy amongst us with more than his usual activity, and that the spirit of insulting religious orders, and plundering the Church's property, so general in the eastern districts of Scotland, has now come nearer home."

The tread of a horse which came up behind him, interrupted his reverie, and he soon saw he was mounted by the same wild rider whom he had left at the tower.

"Good even, my son, and benedicite," said the Sub-Prior as he passed; but the rude soldier scarce acknowledged the greeting, by bending his head; and dashing the spurs into his horse, went on at a pace which soon left the Monk and his mule far behind. "And there," thought the Sub-Prior, "goes another plague of the times—a fellow whose birth designed him to cultivate the earth, but who is perverted by the unhallowed and unchristian divisions of the country, into a

daring dissolute robber. The barons of Scotland are now turned masterful thieves and ruffians, oppressing the poor by violence, and wasting the Church, by extorting free-quarters from abbeys and priories, without either shame or reason.—I fear me I shall be too late to counsel the Abbot to make a stand against these daring *sorners*.*—I must make haste." He struck his mule with his riding-wand accordingly; but, instead of mending her pace, the animal suddenly started from the path, and the rider's utmost efforts could not force her forward.

"Art thou, too, infected with the spirit of the times?" said the Sub-Prior; "thou were wont to be ready and serviceable, and

* To *sorne*, in Scotland, is to exact free quarters against the will of the landlord. It is declared equivalent to theft by a statute passed in the year 1445. The great chieftains oppressed the Monasteries very much by exactions of this nature. The community of Aberbrothwick complained of an Earl of Angus, I think, who was in the regular habit of visiting them once a year, with a train of a thousand horse, and abiding till the whole winter provisions of the convent were exhausted.

art now as restive as any wild jack-man or stubborn heretic of them all."

While he was contending with the startled animal, a voice, like that of a female, chaunted in his ear, or at least very close to it,

"Good evening, Sir Priest, and so late as you ride,
With your mule so fair, and your mantle so wide;
But ride you through valley, or ride you o'er hill,
There is one that has warrant to wait on you still.
Back, back,
The volume black!
I have a warrant to carry it back."

The Sub Prior looked around, but neither bush nor brake was near which could conceal an ambushed songstress. "May Our Lady have mercy on me!" he said; "I trust my senses have not forsaken me—yet how my thoughts should arrange themselves into rhimes which I despise, and music which I care not for, or why there should be the sound of a female voice in ears, to which its melody has been so long indifferent, baffles my comprehension, and almost realizes the vision of Philip the Sa-

Christan.—Come, good mule, betake thee to the path, and let us hence while our judgment serves us."

But the mule stood as if it had been rooted to the spot, backed from the point to which it was pressed by its rider, and by her ears laid close into her neck, and her eyes almost starting from their sockets, testified that she was under great terror.

While the Sub-Prior, by alternate threats and soothing, endeavoured to reclaim the wayward animal to her duty, the wild musical voice was again heard close beside him.

"What ho! Sub-Prior, and came you but here
To conjure a book from a dead woman's bier?
Sain you, and save you, be wary and wise,
Ride back with the book or you'll pay for your prize.
Back, back,
There's death in the track!
In the name of my master, I bid thee bear back."

"In the name of MY Master," said the astonished Monk, "that name before which all things created tremble, I conjure thee to say what thou art that hauntest me thus?"

The same voice replied,

"That which is neither ill nor well,
That which belongs not to Heaven nor to hell,
A wreath of the mist, a bubble of the stream,
'Twixt a waking thought and a sleeping dream;
A form that men spy
With the half shut eye,
In the beams of the setting sun am I."

"This is more than simple fantasy," said the Sub-Prior rousing himself; though, notwithstanding the natural hardihood of his temper, the sensible presence of a supernatural being so near him, failed not to make his blood run cold and his hair bristle. "I charge thee," he said aloud, "be thine errand what it will, to depart and trouble me no more!—False spirit, thou canst not appal any save those who do the work negligently."

The voice immediately answered:

"Vainly, Sir Prior, would'st thou bar me my right!
Like the star when it shoots, I can dart through the night;
I can dance on the torrent and ride on the air,
And travel the world with the bonnie night-mare.
Again, again,
At the crook of the glen,
Where bickers the burnie, I'll meet thee again."

The road was now apparently left open; for the mule collected herself, and changed from her posture of terror to one which promised advance, although a profuse perspiration, and general trembling of the joints, indicated the bodily terror she had undergone.

"I used to doubt the existence of Cabalists and Rosicrucians," thought the Sub-Prior, "but by my Holy Order, I know no longer what to say!—My pulse beats temperately—my hand is cool—I am fasting from every thing but sin, and possessed of my ordinary faculties—Either some fiend is permitted to bewilder me, or the tales of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and others who treat of occult philosophy, are not without foundation.—At the crook of the glen? I could have desired to avoid a second meeting, but I am on the service of the church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against me."

He moved around accordingly, but with precaution, and not without fear; for he neither knew the manner in which, or the

place where, his journey might be next interrupted by his invisible attendant. He descended the glen without interruption for about a mile farther, when, just at the spot where the brook approached the steep hill, with a winding so abrupt as to leave scarcely room for a horse to pass, the mule was again visited with the same symptoms of terror which had before interrupted her course. Better acquainted than before with the cause of her restiveness, the Priest employed no effort to make her proceed, but addressed himself to the object, which he doubted not was the same that had formerly interrupted him, in the words of solemn exorcism prescribed by the church of Rome on such occasions.

In reply to his demand, the voice again sung;—

"Men of good are bold as sackless,*
Men of rude are wild and reckless.
Lie thou still
In the nook of the hill,
For those be before thee that wish thee ill."

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* *Sackless*—Innocent.

While the Sub-Prior listened, with his head turned in the direction from which the sounds seemed to come, he felt as if something rushed against him; and ere he could discover the cause, he was pushed from his saddle with gentle but irresistible force. Before he reached the ground his senses were gone, and he lay long in a state of insensibility; for the sunset had not ceased to gild the top of the distant hill when he fell,—and when he again became conscious of existence, the pale moon was gleaming on the landscape. He awakened in a state of terror, from which, for a few minutes, he found it difficult to shake himself free. At length he sate up on the grass, and became sensible, by repeated exertion, that the only personal injury which he had sustained was the numbness arising from extreme cold. The motion of something near him made the blood again run to his heart, and by a sudden effort he started up, and, looking around, saw to his relief that the noise was occasioned by the footsteps of his own

mule. The peaceable animal had remained quietly beside her master during his trance, browsing on the grass which grew plentifully in that sequestered nook.

With some exertion he collected himself, remounted the animal, and meditating upon his wild adventure, descended the glen till its junction with the broader valley through which the Tweed winds. The draw-bridge was readily dropped at his first summons, and so much had he won upon the heart of the churlish warden, that Peter appeared himself with a lantern to shew the Sub-Prior his way over the perilous pass.

"By my sooth, sir," he said, holding the light up to Father Eustace's face; "you look sorely travelled and deadly pale—but a little matter serves to weary out you men of the cell. I now who speak to you—I have ridden—before I was perched up here on this pillar betwixt wind and water—it may be thirty Scots miles before I broke my fast, and have had the red of a

bramble rose in my cheek all the while—But will you taste some food, or a cup of distilled waters?"

"I may not," said Father Eustace; "being under a vow; but I thank you for your kindness, and pray you to give what I may not accept to the next poor pilgrim who comes hither pale and fainting, for so it shall be the better both with him here, and with you hereafter."

"By my faith, and I will do so," said Peter Bridge-Ward, "even for thy sake—It is strange now, how this Sub-Prior gets round one's heart more than the rest of these cowled gentry, that think of nothing but quaffing and stuffing—Wife, I say—wife, we will give a cup of distilled waters and a crust of bread unto the next pilgrim that comes over; and ye may keep for the purpose the grunds of the last grey-beard,*

* An old-fashioned name for an earthen jar for holding spirits.

and the ill-baked bannock which the bairns couldna eat."

While Peter issued these charitable, and, at the same time, prudent injunctions, the Sub-Prior, whose mild interference had awakened the Bridge-Ward to such an act of unwonted generosity, was pacing onward to the Monastery. In the way, he had to commune with and subdue his own rebellious heart, an enemy, he was sensible, more formidable than any which the external powers of Satan could place in his way.

Father Eustace had indeed strong temptation to suppress the extraordinary incident which had befallen him, which he was the more reluctant to confess, because he had passed so severe a judgment upon Father Philip, who, as he was now not unwilling to allow, had, on his return from Glendearg, encountered obstacles somewhat similar to his own. Of this the Sub-Prior was the more convinced, when, feeling in his bosom for the Book which he had brought off from the Tower of Glendearg, he found it

was amissing, which he could only account for by supposing it had been stolen from him during his trance.

" If I confess this strange visitation," thought the Sub-Prior, " I become the ridicule of all my brethren—I whom the Primate sent hither to be a watch, as it were, and a check upon their follies. I give the Abbot an advantage over me which I shall never again recover, and Heaven only knows how he may abuse it, in his foolish simplicity, to the dishonour and loss of Holy Kirk.—But then, if I make not true confession of my shame, with what face can I again presume to admonish or restrain others?—Avow, proud heart," continued he, addressing himself, " that the weal of Holy Church interests thee less in this matter than thine own humiliation—Yes, Heaven has punished thee even in that point in which thou didst deem thyself most strong, in thy spiritual pride and thy carnal wisdom. Thou hast laughed at, and derided the inexperience of thy brethren—stoop thy-

self in turn to their derision—tell what they may not believe—affirm that which they will ascribe to idle fear, or perhaps to wilful falsehood—sustain the disgrace of a silly visionary, or a wilful deceiver.—Be it so; I will do my duty, and make ample confession to my Superior. If the discharge of this duty destroys my usefulness in this house, God and Our Lady will send me where I can better serve them."

There was no little merit in the resolution thus piously and generously formed by Father Eustace. To men of any rank the esteem of their order is naturally most dear; but in the monastic establishment, cut off, as the brethren are, from other objects of ambition, as well as from all exterior friendship and relationship, the place which they hold in the opinion of each other is all in all.

But the consciousness how much he should rejoice the Abbot and most of the other Monks of Saint Mary's, who were impatient of the unauthorized yet irresisti-

the controul, which he was wont to exercise in the affairs of the convent by a confession which would put him in a ludicrous, or perhaps even in a criminal point of view, could not weigh with Father Eustace in comparison with the duty which his belief enjoined.

As, strong in his feelings of duty, he approached the exterior gate of the Monastery, he was surprised to see torches gleaming, and men assembled around it, some on horseback, some on foot, while several of the Monks, distinguished through the night by their white scapularies, were making themselves busy among the crowd. The Sub-Prior was received with a unanimous shout of joy, which at once made him sensible that he had himself been the object of their anxiety.

"There he is! there he is! God be thanked—there he is, hale and fear!" exclaimed the vassals; while the Monks exclaimed "*Te Deum laudamus*—the blood of thy servants is precious in thy sight!"

"What is the matter, children? what is the matter, my brethren?" said Father Eustace, dismounting at the gate.

"Nay, brother, if thou know'st not, we will not tell thee till thou art in the refectory," answered the Monks; "Suffice it that the Lord Abbot had ordered these, our zealous and faithful vassals, instantly to set forth to guard thee from imminent peril—Ye may ungirth your horses, children, and dismiss; and, to-morrow, each who was at this rendezvous may send to the convent kitchen for a quarter of a yard of roast-beef, and a black-jack full of double ale."

The vassals dispersed with joyful acclamation, and the Monks with equal jubilee, conducted the Sub-Prior into the refectory.

CHAPTER IX.

Here we stand——
Woundless and well, may Heaven's high name be bless'd
for't!
As erst, ere treason couch'd a lance against us.

DECKER.

No sooner was the Sub-Prior hurried into the refectory by his rejoicing companions, than the first person on whom he fixed his eye proved to be Christie of the Clinthill. He was seated in the chimney-corner, fettered and guarded, his features drawn into that air of sulky and turbid resolution with which those hardened in guilt are accustomed to view the approach of punishment. But as the Sub-Prior drew near to him, his face assumed a more wild and startled expression, while he exclaimed—" The devil!

the devil himself, brings the dead back upon the living!"

"Nay," said a Monk to him, "say rather, that Our Lady foils the attempts of the wicked on her faithful servants—our dear brother lives and moves."

"Lives and moves!" said the ruffian, rising and shuffling towards the Sub-Prior as well as his chains would permit; "nay, then I will never trust ashen shaft and steel point more—It is even so," he added, as he gazed on the Sub-Prior with astonishment; "neither wem nor wound—not so much as a rent in his frock!"

"And whence should my wound have come?" said Father Eustace.

"From the good lance that never failed me before," replied Christie of the Clinthill.

"Heaven absolve thee for thy purpose!" said the Sub-Prior; "wouldst thou have slain a servant of the altar?"

"To choose!" answered Christie, "the Fifemen say, an' the whole pack of ye were slain, there were more lost at Flodden."

"Villain! art thou heretic as well as murderer?"

"Not I, by Saint Giles," replied the rider; "I listened blithely enough to the Laird of Monance, when he told me ye were all cheats and knaves; but when he would have had me go hear one Wiseheart, a gospeller, as they call him, he might as well have persuaded the wild colt that had flung one rider to kneel down and help another into the saddle."

"There is some goodness about him yet," said the Sacristan to the Abbot, who at that moment entered—"He refused to hear a heretic preacher."

"The better for him in the next world," answered the Abbot. "Prepare for death, my son—we deliver thee over to the secular arm of our Baillie, for execution on the Gallow-hill by peep of light."

"Amen!" said the ruffian; "'tis the end I must have come by sooner or later—and what care I whether I feed the crows at Saint Mary's or at Carlisle?"

"Let me implore your reverend patience for an instant," said the Sub-Prior; "until I shall enquire"——

"What!" exclaimed the Abbot, observing him for the first time—"Our dear brother restored to us when his life was unhoped for!—nay, kneel not to a sinner like me—stand up—thou hast my blessing. When this villain came to the gate, accused by his own evil conscience, and crying out he had murdered thee, I thought that the pillar of our main aisle had fallen—no more shall a life so precious be exposed to such risks, as occur in this Border country; no longer shall one beloved and rescued of Heaven hold so low a station in the church, as that of a poor Sub-Prior—I will write by express to the Primate for thy speedy removal and advancement."

"Nay, but let me understand," said the Sub-prior; "did this soldier say that he had slain me?"

"That he had transfixed you," answered the Abbot, "in full career with his

lance—but it seems he had taken an indifferent aim. But no sooner didst thou fall to the ground mortally gored, as he deemed, with his weapon, than our blessed Patroness appeared to him, as he averred,"—

"I averred no such thing," said the prisoner; "I said a woman in white interrupted me, as I was about to examine the priest's cassock, for they are usually well lined—she had a bull-rush in her hand, with one touch of which she struck me from my horse, as I might strike down a child of four years old with an iron mace—and then, like a singing fiend as she was, she sung to me,

'Thank the holly-bush
That nods on thy brow;
Or with this slender rush
I had strangled thee now.'

I gathered myself up with fear and difficulty, threw myself on my horse, and came hither like a fool to get myself hanged for a rogue."

"Thou see'st, honoured brother," said

the Abbot to the Sub-Prior, "in what favour thou art with our blessed Patroness, that she herself becomes the guardian of thy paths—Not since the days of our blessed founder hath she shewn such grace to any one. All unworthy were we to hold spiritual superiority over thee, and we pray thee to prepare for thy speedy removal to Aberbrothock."

"Alas! my lord and father," said the Sub-Prior, "your words pierce my very soul. Under the seal of confession will I presently tell thee why I conceive myself rather the baffled sport of a spirit of another sort, than the protected favourite of the heavenly powers. But first let me ask this unhappy man a question or two."

"Do as ye list," replied the Abbot—"but you shall not convince me that it is fitting you remain in this inferior office in the convent of Saint Mary."

"I would ask of this poor man," said Father Eustace, "for what purpose he nourished the thought of putting to death one who never did him evil."

"Ay! but thou didst menace me with evil," said the ruffian, "and no one but a fool is menaced twice. Doest thou not remember what you said touching the Primate and Lord James, and the black pool of Jedwood? Didst thou think me fool enough to wait till thou hadst betrayed me to the sack and the fork? There were small wisdom in that methinks—as little as in coming hither to tell my own misdeeds—I think the devil was in me when I took this road—I might have remembered the proverb, 'Never Friar forgot feud.'"

"And it was solely for that—for that only hasty word of mine, uttered in a moment of impatience, and forgotten ere it was well spoken!" said Father Eustace.

"Ay! for that, and—for the love of thy gold crucifix," said Christie of the Clinthill.

"Gracious heaven! and could the yellow metal—the glittering earth—so far overcome every sense of what is thereby represented?—Father Abbot, I pray, as a dear

boon, you will deliver this guilty person to my mercy."

"Nay, brother," interposed the Sacristan, "to your doom if you will, not to your mercy—Remember, we are not all equally favoured by our blessed Lady, nor is it likely that every frock in the Convent will serve as a coat of proof when a lance is couched against it."

"For that very reason," said the Sub-Prior, "I would not that for my worthless self the community were to fall at feud with Julian of Avenel, this man's master."

"Our Lady forbid!" said the Sacristan, "he is a second Julian the apostate."

"With our reverend father the Abbot's permission then," said Father Eustace, "I desire this man be freed from his chains, and suffered to depart uninjured;—and here, friend," he added, giving him the golden crucifix, "is the image for which thou wert willing to stain thy hands with murther. View it well; and may it inspire thee with other and better thoughts than those which

referred to it as a piece of bullion. Part with it, nevertheless, if thy necessities require, and get thee one of such coarse substance that mammon shall have no share in any of the reflections to which it gives rise. It was the bequest of a dear friend to me; but dearer service can it never do than that of winning a soul to heaven."

The Borderer, now freed from chains, stood gazing alternately on the Sub-Prior and on the golden crucifix. "By Saint Giles," said he, "I understand ye not!—An ye give me gold for couching my lance at thee, what would you give me to level it at a heretic?"

"The Church," said the Sub-Prior, "will try the effect of her spiritual censures to bring these stray sheep into the fold, ere she employ the edge of the sword of Saint Peter."

"Ay, but," said the ruffian, "they say the Primate recommends a little strangling and burning in aid both of censure and of sword. But fare ye weel, I owe you a life, and it may be I will not forget my debt."

The Baillie now came bustling in, dressed in his blue coat and bandaliers, and attended by two or three halberdiers. "I have been a thought too late in waiting upon your reverend lordship. I am grown somewhat fatter since the field of Pinkie, and my leathern coat slips not on so soon as it was wont; but the dungeon is ready, and though, as I said, I have been some what late"——

Here his intended prisoner walked gravely up to the officer's nose, to his great amazement.

"You have been indeed somewhat late, Baillie," said he, "and I am greatly obligated to your buff-coat, and to the time you took to put it on. If the secular arm had arrived some quarter of an hour sooner, I had been out of the reach of spiritual grace; but as it is, I wish you good even, and a safe riddance out of your garment of durance, in which you have much the air of a hog in armour."

Wroth was the Baillie with this compari-

son, and exclaimed in ire—"An' it were not for the presence of the venerable Lord Abbot, thou knave"——

"Nay, an' thou would'st try conclusions," said Christie of the Clinthill, "I will meet thee at day-break by Saint Mary's well."

"Hardened wretch," said Father Eustace, "art thou but this instant delivered from death, and doest thou so soon morse thoughts of slaughter?"

"I will meet with thee ere it be long, thou knave," said the Baillie, "and teach thee thine Oramus."

"I will meet thy cattle in a moonlight night, before that day," said he of the Clinthill.

"I will have thee by the neck one misty morning, thou strong thief," answered the secular officer of the church.

"Thou art thyself as strong a thief as ever rode," retorted Christie; "and if the worms were once feasting on that fat carcase of thine, I might well hope to have

thine office, by favour of these reverend men."

"A cast of their office, and a cast of mine," answered the Baillie; "a cord and a confessor, that is all thou wilt have from us."

"Sirs," said the Sub-Prior, observing that his brethren began to take more interest than was exactly decorous in this wrangling betwixt justice and iniquity, "I pray "you both to depart—Master Baillie, retire with your halberdiers, and trouble not the man whom we have dismissed.—And thou, Christie, or whatever be thy name, take thy departure, and remember thou owest thy life to the Lord Abbot's clemency."

"Nay, as to that," answered Christie, "I judge that I owe it to your own; but impute it to whom ye list, I owe a life among ye, and there is an end." And whistling as he went, he left the apartment, seeming as if he held the life which he had forfeited not worthy farther thanks.

"Obstinate even to brutality!" said Father Eustace; "and yet who knows but some better ore may lie under so rude an exterior?"

"Save a thief from the gallows," said the Sacristan—"you know the rest of the proverb; and admitting, as may Heaven grant, that our lives and limbs are safe from this outrageous knave, who shall insure our meal and our malt, our herds and our flocks?"

"Marry, that will I, my brethren," said an aged Monk. "Ah, brethren, you little know what may be made of a repentant robber. In Abbot Ingilram's days—ay, and I remember them as it were yesterday—the freebooters were the best welcome men that came to Saint Mary's. Ay, they paid tithe of every drove that they brought over from the South, and because they were something lightly come by, I have known them make the tithe a seventh—that is, if their confessor knew his business—ay, when we saw from the tower a score of fat bullocks, or a drove of sheep coming

down the valley, with two or three stout men-at-arms behind them, with their glittering steel caps, and their black-jacks, and their long lances, the good Lord Abbot Ingilram was wont to say—he was a merry man—there come the tithes of the spoilers of the Egyptians! Ay, and I have seen the famous John the Armstrang,—a fair man he was and a goodly, the more pity that hemp was ever heckled for him—I have seen him come into the Abbey-Church with nine tassells of gold in his bonnet, and every tassell made of nine English nobles, and he would go from chapel to chapel, and from image to image, and from altar to altar, on his knees—and leave here a tassell, and there a noble, till there was as little gold on his bonnet as on my hood—you will find no such Border thieves now!"

"No truly, Brother Nicolas," answered the Abbot; "they are more apt to take any gold the Church has left, than to bequeath or bestow any—and for cattle, beshrew me if I think they care whether beeves have

fed on the meadows of Lanercost Abbey or of Saint Mary's."

"There is no good thing left in them," said Father Nicolas; "they are clean naught —Ah, the thieves that I have seen!—such proper men! and as pitiful as proper, and as pious as pitiful!"

"It skills not talking of it, Brother Nicolas," said the Abbot; "and I will now dismiss you, my brethren, holding your meeting upon this our inquisition concerning the danger of our reverend Sub-Prior, instead of the attendance on the lauds this evening—Yet let the bells be duly rung for the edification of the laymen without, and also that the novices may give due reverence.—And now, benedicite, brethren! The cellarer will bestow on each a grace-cup and a morsel as ye pass the buttery, for ye have been turmoiled and anxious, and dangerous it is to fall asleep in such case with empty stomach."

"*Gratias agimus quam maximas, Domine reverendissime,*" replied the brethren, departing in their due order.

But the Sub-Prior remained behind, and falling on his knees before the Abbot, as he was about to withdraw, craved him to hear under the seal of confession the adventures of the day. The reverend Lord Abbot yawned, and would have alleged fatigue; but to Father Eustace, of all men, he was ashamed to shew indifference in his religious duties. The confession, therefore, proceeded, in which Father Eustace told all the extraordinary circumstances which had befallen him during the journey. And being questioned by the Abbot, whether he was not conscious of any secret sin, through which he might have been subjected for a time to the delusions of evil spirits, the Sub-Prior admitted with frank avowal, that he thought he might have deserved such penance for having judged with unfraternal rigour of the report of Father Philip the Sacristan.

"Heaven," said the penitent, "may have been willing to convince me, not only that he can at pleasure open a communication betwixt us and beings of a differ-

ent, and, as we word it, supernatural class, but also to punish our pride of superior wisdom, or superior courage, or superior learning."

It is well said that virtue is its own reward; and I question if duty was ever more completely recompensed, than by the audience which the reverend Abbot so unwillingly yielded to the confession of the Sub-Prior. To find the object of his fear shall we say, or of his envy, or of both, accusing himself of the very error with which he had so tacitly charged him, was at once a corroboration of the Abbot's judgment, a soothing of his pride, and an allaying of his fears. The sense of triumph, however, rather increased than diminished his natural good-humour; and so far was Abbot Boniface from being disposed to tyrannize over his Sub-Prior, in consequence of this discovery, that in his exhortation he hovered somewhat ludicrously betwixt the natural expression of his own gratified vanity, and his kindly reluctance to hurt the feelings of Father Eustace.

"My brother," said he, *ex cathedra*, "it cannot have escaped your judicious observation, that we have often declined our own judgment in favour of your opinion, even about those matters which most nearly concerned the community. Nevertheless, grieved would we be, could you think that we did this either because we deemed our own opinion less pregnant, or our wit more shallow, than that of our other brethren. For it was done exclusively to give our younger brethren, such as your much esteemed self, my dearest brother, that courage which is necessary to a free deliverance of your opinion,—we oftimes setting apart our proper judgment, that our inferiors, and especially our dear brother the Sub-Prior, may be comforted and encouraged in proposing valiantly his own thoughts. Which our deference and humility may, in some sort, have produced in your mind, most reverend brother, that self-opinion of parts and knowledge, which hath led unfortunately to your over-estimating your own

faculties, and thereby subjecting yourself, as is but too visible, to the japes and mockeries of evil spirits. For it is assured that Heaven always holdeth us in the least esteem when we deem of ourselves most highly; and also, on the other hand, it may be that we have somewhat departed from what became our high seat in this Abbey, in suffering ourselves to be too much guided, and even as it were controuled, by the voice of our inferior. Wherefore," continued the Lord Abbot, " in both of us such faults shall and must be amended—you hereafter presuming less upon your gifts and carnal wisdom, and I taking heed not so easily to relinquish mine own opinion for that of one lower in place and in office. Nevertheless, we would not that we should thereby lose the high advantage which we have derived, and may yet derive, from your wise counsel, which hath been so often recommended to us by our most reverend Primate. Wherefore, on affairs of high moment, we will call you to our pre-

sence in private and listen to your opinion, which, if it shall agree with our own, we will deliver to the chapter, as emanating directly from ourselves; thus sparing you, dearest brother, that seeming victory which is so apt to engender spiritual pride, and avoiding ourselves the temptation of falling into that modest facility of opinion, whereby our office is lessened and our person (were that of consequence) rendered less important in the eyes of the community over which we preside."

Notwithstanding the high notions which, as a rigid Catholic, Father Eustace entertained of the sacrament of confession, as his church calls it, there was some danger that a sense of the ridiculous might have stolen on him, when he heard his Superior, with such simple cunning, lay out a little plan for availing himself of the Sub-Prior's wisdom and experience, while he took the whole credit to himself. Yet his conscience immediately told him that he was right.

"I should have thought more," he reflected, "of the spiritual Superior, and less of the individual. I should have spread my mantle over the frailties of my spiritual father, and done what I might to support his character, and, of course, to extend his utility among the brethren, as well as with others. The Abbot cannot be humbled, but what the community must be humbled in his person. Her boast is, that over all her children, especially over those called to places of distinction, she can diffuse those gifts which are necessary to render them illustrious."

Actuated by these sentiments, Father Eustace frankly assented to the charge which his Superior, even in that moment of authority, had rather intimated than made, and signified his humble acquiescence in any mode of communicating his counsel which might be most agreeable to the Lord Abbot, and might best remove from himself all temptation to glory in his own wisdom. He then

prayed the reverend father to assign him such penance as might best suit his offence, intimating at the same time, that he had already fasted the whole day.

"And it is that I complain of," answered the Abbot, instead of giving him credit for his abstinence; "it is of these very penances, fasts, and vigils, which we complain; as tending only to generate air and fumes of vanity, which, ascending from the stomach into the head, do but puff us up with vain glory and self opinion. It is meet and beseeming that novices should undergo fasts and vigils; for some part of every community must fast, and young stomachs may best endure it. Besides, in them it abates wicked thoughts, and the desire of worldly delights. But, reverend brother, for those to fast who are dead and mortified to the world, as I and thou, is work of supererogation, and is but the matter of spiritual pride. Wherefore, I enjoin thee, most reverend brother, go to the buttery, and drink two cups at least of good wine, eating withal a comfortable morsel.

such as may best suit thy taste and stomach. And, in respect that thine opinion of thy own wisdom hath at times made thee less conformable to, and companionable with, the weaker and less learned brethren, I enjoin thee, during the said repast, to chuse for thy companion, our reverend brother Nicolas, and, without interruption or impatience, to listen for a stricken hour to his narration, concerning those things which befell in the times of our venerable predecessor, Abbot Ingilram, on whose soul may Heaven have mercy! And for such holy exercises as may further advantage your soul, and expiate the faults whereof you have contritely and humbly avowed yourself guilty, we will ponder upon that matter, and announce our will unto you the next morning."

It was remarkable, that after this memorable evening, the feelings of the worthy Abbot towards his adviser were much more kindly and friendly than when he deemed the Sub-Prior the impeccable and infallible

person, in whose garment of virtue and wisdom no flaw was to be discerned. It seemed as if this avowal of his own imperfection had recommended Father Eustace to the friendship of the Superior, although at the same time this increase of benevolence was attended with some circumstances, which, to a man of the Sub-Prior's natural elevation of mind and temper, were more grievous than even undergoing the legends of the dull and verbose Father Nicolas. For instance, the Abbot seldom mentioned him to the other monks, without designing him our beloved Brother Eustace, poor man !—and now and then he used to warn the younger brethren against the snares of vain-glory and spiritual pride, which Satan sets for the more rigidly righteous, with such looks and demonstrations as did all but expressly designate the Sub-Prior as one who had fallen at one time under such delusions. Upon such occasions, it required all the votive obedience of a monk, all the philosophical discipline of the schools, and all the patience

of a Christian, to enable Father Eustace to endure the pompous and patronizing parade of his honest, but somewhat thick-headed Superior. He began himself to be desirous of leaving the Monastery, or at least he manifestly declined to interfere with its affairs, in that marked and authoritative manner, which he had at first practised.

CHAPTER X.

You call this education, do you not?
Why 'tis the forced march of a herd of bullocks
Before a shouting drover. The glad van
Move on at ease, and pause a while to snatch
A passing morsel from the dewy green-sward,
While all the blows, the oaths, the indignation,
Fall on the croupe of the ill-fated laggard
That cripples in the rear.

Old Play.

Two or three years glided on, during which the storm of the approaching alteration in church government became each day louder and more perilous. Owing to the circumstances which we have intimated in the end of the last chapter, the Sub-Prior Eustace appeared to have altered considerably his habits of life. He afforded, on all extraordinary occasions, to the Abbot, whether privately, or in the assembled chapter, the support of his wisdom and experience; but in his ordinary habits he seemed now to live more for himself, and less for the

community, than had been his former practice.

He often absented himself for whole days from the convent; and as the adventure of Glendearg dwelt deeply on his memory, he was repeatedly induced to visit that lonely tower, and to take an interest in the orphans who had their shelter under its roof. Besides, he felt a deep anxiety to know whether the volume which he had lost, when so strangely preserved from the lance of the murderer, had again found its way back to the tower of Glendearg. "It was strange," he thought, "that a spirit," for such he could not help judging the being whose voice he had heard, "should, on the one side, seek the advancement of heresy, and, on the other, interpose to save the life of a zealous Catholic priest."

But from no enquiry which he made at the various inhabitants of the Tower of Glendearg could he learn that the copy of the translated Scriptures, for which he made such diligent enquiry, had again been seen by any of them.

In the meanwhile the good father's occasional visits were of no small consequence to Edward Glendinning and to Mary Avenel. The former displayed a power for apprehending and retaining whatever was taught him, which filled Father Eustace with admiration. He was at once acute and industrious, alert and accurate; one of those rare combinations of talent and industry, which are seldom combined save in the most fortunate subjects.

It was the earnest desire of Father Eustace that the excellent qualities thus early displayed by Edward should be dedicated to the service of the church, to which he thought the youth's own consent might be easily obtained, as he was of a calm, contemplative, retired habit, and seemed to consider knowledge as the principal object, and its enlargement as the greatest pleasure, in life. As to the mother, the Sub-Prior had little doubt that, trained as she was to view the Monks of Saint Mary's with such profound reverence, she would be but too happy in an oppor-

tunity of enrolling one of her sons in its honoured community. But the good Father proved to be mistaken in both these particulars.

When he spoke to Elspeth Glendinning of that which a mother best loves to hear —the proficiency and abilities of her son —she listened with a delighted ear. But when Father Eustace hinted at the duty of dedicating to the service of the church, talents which seemed fitted to defend and to adorn it, the dame endeavoured always to shift the subject; and when pressed farther, enlarged on her own incapacity, as a lone woman, to manage the feu; on the advantage which her neighbours of the township were often taking of her unprotected state, and on the wish she had that Edward might fill his father's place, remain in the tower, and close her eyes.

On such occasions the Sub-Prior would answer, that even in a worldly point of view, the welfare of the family would be best consulted by one of the sons entering into the community of St Mary's, as it was not

to be supposed that he would fail to afford his family the important protection which he could then easily extend towards them. What could be a more pleasing prospect than to see him high in honour? or what more sweet than to have the last duties rendered to her by a son, revered for his holiness of life and exemplary manners? Besides, he endeavoured to impress upon the dame that her eldest son, Halbert, whose bold temper and headstrong indulgence of a wandering humour rendered him incapable of learning, was for that reason, as well as that he was her eldest born, fittest to bustle through the affairs of the world, and manage the little fief.

Elspeth durst not directly dissent from what was proposed, for fear of giving displeasure, and yet she always had something to say against it. Halbert, she said, was not like any of the neighbour boys —he was taller by the head, and stronger by the half, than any boy of his years within the Halidome. But he was fit for no peaceful work that could be devised. If

he liked a book ill, he liked a plough or a pattle worse. He had scoured his father's old broad-sword—suspended it by a belt round his waist, and seldom stirred without it. He was a sweet boy and a gentle if speak him fair, but cross him and he was a born devil. "In a word," she said, bursting into tears, "deprive me of Edward, good father, and ye bereave my house of prop and pillar; for my heart tells me that Halbert will take to his father's gates, and die his father's death."

When the conversation came to this crisis, the good-humoured Monk was always content to drop the discussion for the time, trusting some opportunity would occur of removing her prejudices, for such he thought them, against Edward's proposed destination.

When, leaving the mother, the Sub-Prior addressed himself to the son, animating his zeal for knowledge, and pointing out how amply it might be gratified should he agree to take holy orders, he found the same repugnance which Dame Elspeth had exhi-

bited. Edward pleaded a want of sufficient vocation to so serious a profession—his reluctance to leave his mother and other objections, which the Sub-Prior treated as evasive.

"I plainly perceive," he said one day, in answer to them, "that the devil has his factors as well as Heaven, and that they are equally, or alas! the former are perhaps more active, in bespeaking for their master the first of the market. I trust, young man, that neither idleness, nor licentious pleasure, nor the love of worldly gain and worldly grandeur, the chief baits with which the great Fisher of souls conceals his hook, are the causes of your declining the career to which I would incite you. But above all I trust—above all I hope—that the vanity of superior knowledge—a sin with which those who have made proficiency in learning are most frequently beset—has not led you into the awful hazard of listening to the dangerous doctrines which are now afloat concerning religion. Better for you that you were as grossly ignorant as the beasts which perish,

than that the pride of knowledge should induce you to lend ear to the voice of the heretics." Edward Glendinning listened to the rebuke with a downcast look, and failed not, when it was concluded, earnestly to vindicate himself from the charge of having pushed his studies into any subjects which the Church inhibited; and so the Monk was left to form vain conjectures respecting the cause of his reluctance to embrace the monastic state.

It is an old proverb, used by Chaucer, and quoted by Elizabeth, that "the greatest clerks are not the wisest men;" and it is as true as if the poet had not rhimed, or the queen reasoned on it. If Father Eustace had not had his thoughts turned so much to the progress of heresy, and so little to what was passing in the little tower, he might have read, in the speaking eyes of Mary Avenel, now a girl of fourteen or fifteen, reasons which might disincline her youthful companion towards the monastic vows. I have said, that she also was a pro-

mising pupil of the good father, upon whom her innocent and infantine beauty had an effect of which he was himself, perhaps, unconscious. Her rank and expectations entitled her to be taught the arts of reading and writing;—and each lesson which the Monk assigned her was conned over in company with Edward, and by him explained and re-explained, and again illustrated, until she became perfectly mistress of it.

In the beginning of their studies, Halbert had been their school companion.. But the boldness and impatience of his disposition soon quarrelled with an occupation, in which, without assiduity and unremitted attention, no progress was to be expected. The Sub-Prior's visits were at irregular intervals, and often weeks would intervene between them, in which case Halbert was sure to forget all that had been prescribed for him to learn, and much which he had partly acquired before. His deficiences on these occasions gave him pain, but it was not of that sort which produces amendment.

For a time, like all who are fond of idle-

ness, he endeavoured to detach the attention of his brother and Mary Avenel from their task, rather than to learn his own, and such dialogues as the following would ensue.

"Take your bonnet, Edward, and make haste—the Laird of Colmslie is at the head of the glen with his hounds."

"I care not, Halbert," answered the younger brother; "two brace of dogs may kill a deer without my being there to see them, and I must help Mary Avenel with her lesson."

"Ay! you will labour at the Monk's lessons till you turn monk yourself," answered Halbert.—"Mary, will you go with me, and I will shew you the cushat's nest I told you of?"

"I cannot go with you, Halbert," answered Mary, "because I must study this lesson—it will take me long to learn it—I am sorry I am so dull, for if I could get my task as fast as Edward, I should like to go with you."

"Should you, indeed?" said Halbert;

"then I will wait for you—and, what is more, I will try to get my lesson also."

With a smile and a sigh he took up the primer, and began heavily to con over the task which had been assigned him. As if banished from the society of the two others, he sate sad and solitary in one of the deep window-recesses, and after in vain struggling with the difficulties of his task, and his disinclination to learn it, he found himself involuntarily engaged in watching the movements of the other two students, instead of toiling any longer.

The picture which Halbert looked upon was delightful in itself, but somehow or other it afforded very little pleasure to him. The beautiful girl, with looks of simple, yet earnest anxiety, was bent on disentangling those intricacies which obstructed her progress to knowledge, and looking ever and anon to Edward for assistance; while, seated close by her side, and watchful to remove every obstacle from her way, he seemed at once to be proud of the progress which his pupil made, and of the as-

sistance which he was able to render her There was a bond betwixt them, a strong and interesting tie, the desire of obtaining knowledge, the pride of surmounting difficulties.

Feeling most acutely, yet ignorant of the nature and source of his own emotions, Halbert could no longer endure to look upon this quiet scene, but, starting up, dashed his book from him, and exclaimed aloud,—"To the fiend I bequeath all books, and the dreamers that make them!—I would a score of Southrons would come up the glen, and we should learn how little all this muttering and scribbling is worth."

Mary Avenel and his brother started, and looked at Halbert with surprise, while he went on with great animation, his features swelling, and the tears starting into his eyes as he spoke.—"Yes, Mary—I wish a score of Southrons came up the glen this very day; and you should see one good hand, and one good sword, do more to protect you than all the books that were

ever opened and all the pens that ever grew on a goose's wing."

Mary looked a little surprised and a little frightened at his vehemence, but instantly replied affectionately, "You are vexed, Halbert, because you do not get your lesson so fast as Edward can; and so am I, for I am as stupid as you—But come, and Edward shall sit betwixt us and teach us."

"He shall not teach *me*," said Halbert, in the same angry mood; "I never can teach *him* to do any thing that is honourable and manly, and he shall not teach *me* any of his monkish tricks.—I hate the Monks, with their drawling nasal tone like so many frogs, and their long black petticoats like so many women, and their reverences, and their lordships, and their lazy vassals, that do nothing but paddle in the mire with plough and harrow, from Yule to Michaelmass. I will call none lord, but him who wears a sword to make his title good; and I will call none man, but he that can bear himself manlike and masterful."

"For Heaven's sake, peace, brother," said Edward; "if such words were taken up and reported out of the house, they would be our mother's ruin."

"Report them yourself then, and they will be *your* making, and nobody's marring save mine own. Say, that Halbert Glendinning will never be vassal to an old man with a cowl and a shaven crown, while there are twenty barons who wear casque and plume that lack bold followers. Let them grant you these wretched acres, and much meal may they bear you to make your *brochan*." He left the room hastily, but instantly returned, and continued to speak with the same tone of quick and irritated feeling. "And you need not think so much, neither of you, and especially you, Edward, need not think so much of your parchment book there, and your cunning in reading it. By my faith I will soon learn to read as well as you; and—for I know a better teacher than your grim old Monk, and a better book than his printed breviary; and

since you like scholar-craft so well, Mary Avenel, you will see whether Edward or I have most of it." He left the apartment and came not again.

"What can be the matter with him?" said Mary, following Halbert with her eyes from the window, as with hasty and unequal steps he ran up the wild glen.—"Where can your brother be going, Edward?—what book?—what teacher does he talk of?

"It avails not guessing," said Edward. "Halbert is angry—he knows not why, and speaks of he knows not what; let us go again to our lessons, and he will come home when he has tired himself with scrambling among the crags as usual."

But Mary's anxiety on account of Halbert seemed more deeply rooted. She declined prosecuting the task in which they had been so pleasingly engaged, under the excuse of a head-ache; nor could Edward prevail upon her to resume it again that morning.

Meanwhile Halbert, his head unbonnetted, his features swelled with jealous anger, and the tear still in his eye, sped up the wild and upper extremity of the little valley of Glendearg with the speed of a roebuck, chusing, as if in desperate defiance of the difficulties of the way, the wildest and most dangerous paths, and voluntarily exposing himself an hundred times to dangers which he might have escaped by turnning a little aside from them. It seemed as if he wished his course to be as straight as that of the arrow to its mark.

He arrived at length in a narrow and secluded *cleugh*, or deep ravine, which ran down into the valley, and contributed a scanty rivulet to the supply of the brook with which Glendearg is watered. Up this he sped with the same precipitate haste which had marked his departure from the tower, nor did he pause and look around, until he had reached the fountain from which the rivulet had its rise.

Here Halbert stopped short, and cast a gloomy, and almost a frightened glance around him. A huge rock rose in front, from a cleft of which grew a wild holly-tree, whose dark green branches rustled over the spring which arose beneath. The banks on either hand rose so high, and approached each other so closely, that it was only when the sun was in its meridian height, and during the summer solstice, that its rays could reach the bottom of the chasm in which he now stood. But it was now summer, and the hour was noon, so that the unwonted reflection of the sun was dancing in the pellucid fountain.

"It is the season and the hour," said Halbert to himself; "and now I——I might soon become wiser than Edward with all his pains! Mary should see whether he alone is fit to be consulted, and to sit by her side, and hang over her as she reads, and point out every word and every letter. And she loves me better than him—I am sure she does—for she comes of noble blood, and

scorns sloth and cowardice.—And do I myself not stand here slothful and cowardly as any priest of them all?—Why should I fear to call upon this form—this shape?—Already have I endured the vision, and why not again?—What can it do to me, who am a man of lith and limb, and have by my side my father's sword? Does my heart beat—do my hairs bristle, at the thought of calling up a painted shadow, and how should I face a band of Southron in flesh and blood? By the soul of the first Glendinning I will make proof of the charm!"

He cast the leathern brogue or buskin from his right foot, planted himself in a firm posture, unsheathed his sword, and first looking around to collect his resolution, he bowed three times deliberately towards the holly-tree, and as often to the little fountain, repeating at the same time, with a determined voice, the following rhymes:

"Thrice to the holly brake—
Thrice to the well:—
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel!

Noon gleams on the Lake—
Noon glows on the Fell—
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel."

These lines were hardly uttered, when there stood the figure of a female clothed in white, within three steps of Halbert Glendinning.

"I guess 'twas frightful there to see
A lady richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly.*"

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* Coleridge's Christabelle.

CHAPTER XI.

There's something in that ancient superstition,
Which, erring as it is, our fancy loves.
The spring that, with its thousand crystal bubbles,
Bursts from the bosom of some desert rock
In secret solitude, may well be deem'd
The haunt of something purer, more refin'd,
And mightier than ourselves.

Old Play.

YOUNG Halbert Glendinning had scarcely pronounced the mystical rhymes, than, as we have mentioned in the conclusion of the last chapter, an appearance, as of a beautiful female, dressed in white, stood within two yards of him. His terror for the moment overcame his natural courage, as well as the strong resolution which he had formed, that the figure which he had now twice seen should not a third time daunt him. But it would seem there is something thril-

ling and abhorrent to flesh and blood, in the consciousness that we stand in presence of a being in form like to ourselves; but so different in faculties and nature, that we can neither understand its purposes, nor calculate its means of pursuing them.

Halbert stood silent and gasped for breath, his hairs erecting themselves on his head—his mouth open—his eyes fixed—and, as the sole remaining sign of his late determined purpose, his sword pointed towards the apparition. At length, with a voice of ineffable sweetness, the White Lady, for by that name we shall distinguish this being, sung, or rather chaunted, the following lines:—

"Youth of the dark eye, wherefore did'st thou call me?
Wherefore art thou here, if terrors can appal thee?
He that seeks to deal with us must know nor fear, nor failing;
To coward and churl our speech is dark, our gifts are unavailing.
The breeze that brought me hither now, must sweep Egyptian ground,
The fleecy cloud on which I ride for Araby is bound;

The fleecy cloud is drifting by, the breeze sighs for my stay,
For I must sail a thousand miles before the close of day."

The astonishment of Halbert began once more to give way to his resolution, and he gained voice enough to say, though with a faultering accent, "In the name of God, what art thou?" The answer was in melody of a different tone and measure.

"What I am I must not show—
What I am thou could'st not know—
Something betwixt heaven and hell—
Something that neither stood nor fell—
Something that through thy wit or will
May work thee good—may work thee ill.
Neither substance quite, nor shadow,
Haunting lonely moor and meadow,
Dancing by the haunted spring,
Riding on the whirlwind's wing;
Aping in fantastic fashion
Every change of human passion,
While o'er our frozen minds they pass,
Like shadows from the mirror'd glass.
Wayward, fickle is our mood,
Hovering betwixt bad and good,

Happier than brief-dated man,
Living ten times o'er his span;
Far less happy, for we have
Help nor hope beyond the grave!
Man awakes to joy or sorrow;
Our's the sleep that knows no morrow.
This is all that I can show—
This is all that thou may'st know."

The White Lady paused, and seemed to await an answer; but, as Halbert hesitated how to frame his speech, the vision seemed gradually to fade, and become more and more incorporeal. Justly guessing this to be a symptom of her disappearance, Halbert compelled himself to say,—"Lady, when I saw you in the glen, and when you brought back the black book of Mary of Avenel, thou didst say I should one day learn to read it."

The White Lady replied,

"Ay! and I taught thee the word and the spell,
To waken me here by the Fairies' Well.
But thou hast loved the heron and hawk,
More than to seek my haunted walk;
And thou hast loved the lance and the sword,
More than good text and holy word;

And thou hast loved the deer to track,
More than the lines and the letters black;
And thou art a ranger of moss and wood,
And scornest the nurture of gentle blood."

"I will do so no longer, fair maiden," said Halbert; "I desire to learn; and thou didst promise me, that when I did so desire, thou wouldst be my helper; I am no longer afraid of thy presence, and I am no longer regardless of instruction." As he uttered these words the figure of the White Maiden grew gradually as distinct as it had been at first; and what had well nigh faded into an ill-defined and colourless shadow, again assumed an appearance at least of corporeal consistency, although the hues were less vivid, and the outline of the figure less distinct and defined,—so at least it seemed to Halbert,—than those of an ordinary inhabitant of the earth. "Wilt thou grant my request," he said, "fair Lady, and give to my keeping the holy book which Mary of Avenel has so often wept for?"

The White Lady replied,

"Thy craven fear my truth accused,
Thine idlehood my trust abused;
He that draws to harbour late,
Must sleep without, or burst the gate.
There is a star for thee which burn'd,
Its influence wanes, its course is turn'd;
Valour and constancy alone
Can bring thee back the chance that's flown.'

"If I have been a loiterer, Lady," answered young Glendinning, "thou shalt now find me willing to press forward with double speed. Other thoughts have filled my mind, other thoughts have engaged my heart within a brief period—and by heaven, other occupations shall henceforward fill up my time. I have lived in this day the space of years—I came hither a boy—I will return a man—a man, such as may converse not only with his own kind, but with whatever God permits to be visible to him. I will learn the contents of that mysterious volume—I will learn why the Lady of Avenel loved it—why the priests feared, and would have stolen it—why thou didst twice recover it from their hands.—What mystery is wrapt in it?—Speak, I

conjure thee." The Lady assumed an air peculiarly sad and solemn, as, drooping her head, and folding her arms on her bosom, she replied:

"Within that awful volume lies
The mytery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race,
To whom God has granted grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

"Give me the volume, Lady," said young Glendinning. "They call me idle—they call me dull—in this pursuit my industry shall not fail; nor, with God's blessing, shall my understanding. Give me the volume." The apparition again replied:

"Many a fathom dark and deep
I have laid the book to sleep;
Ethereal fires around it glowing—
Ethereal music ever flowing—
The sacred pledge of Heav'n
All things revere,
Each in his sphere,
Save man for whom 'twas giv'n.

Lend thy hand, and thou shalt spy
Things ne'er seen by mortal eye."

Halbert Glendinning boldly reached his hand to the White Lady.

"Fearest thou to go with me?" she said, as his hand trembled at the soft and cold touch of her own—

"Fearest thou to go with me?
Still it is free to thee
A peasant to dwell;
Thou may'st drive the dull steer,
And chace the king's deer,
But never more come near
This haunted well."

"If what thou sayest be true," said the undaunted boy, "my destinies are higher than thine own. There shall be neither well nor wood which I dare not visit. No fear of aught, natural or supernatural, shall bar my path through my native valley."

He had scarce uttered the words when they both descended through the earth, with a rapidity which took away Halbert's breath and every other sensation, saving that of

being hurried on with the utmost velocity. At length they stopped with a shock so sudden, that the mortal journeyer through this unknown space must have been thrown down with violence, had he not been upheld by his supernatural companion.

It was more than a minute, ere, looking around him, he beheld a grotto, or natural cavern, composed of the most splendid spars and crystals, which returned in a thousand prismatic hues the light of a brilliant flame that glowed on an altar of alabaster. This altar, with its fire, formed the central point of the grotto, which was of a round form, and very high in the roof, resembling in some respects the dome of a cathedral. Corresponding to the four points of the compass, there went off four long galleries or arcades, constructed of the same brilliant materials with the dome itself, and the termination of which was lost in darkness.

No human imagination can conceive, or words suffice to describe, the glorious radiance, which, shot fiercely forth by the flame,

was returned from so many hundred thousand points of reflection, afforded by the sparry pillars and their numerous angular crystals. The fire itself did not remain steady and unmoved, but rose and fell, sometimes ascending in a brilliant pyramid of condensaed flme half way up the lofty expanse, and again fading into a softer and more rosy hue, and hovering as it were on the surface of the altar to collect its strength for another brilliant exertion. There was no visible fuel by which it was fed, nor did it emit either smoke or vapour of any kind.

What was of all the most remarkable, the black volume so often mentioned lay not only unconsumed, but untouched in the slightest degree amid this intensity of fire, which, while it seemed to be of force sufficient to melt adamant, had no effect whatever on the sacred book thus subjected to its utmost influence.

The White Lady, having paused long enough to let young Glendinning take a complete survey of what was around him, now said in her usual chaunt,

"Here lies the volume thou boldly has sought;
Touch it, and take it, 'twill dearly be bought."

Familiarized in some degree with marvels, and desperately desirous of shewing the courage he had boasted, Halbert plunged his hand, without hesitation, into the flame, trusting to the rapidity of the motion, to snatch out the volume before the fire could greatly affect him. But he was greatly disappointed. The flame instantly caught upon his sleeve, and though he withdrew his hand immediately, yet his arm was so dreadfully scorched, that he had well nigh screamed with pain. He suppressed the natural expression of anguish, however, and only intimated the agony which he felt by a contortion and a muttered groan. The White Lady passed her cold hand over his arm; and, ere she had finished the following metrical chaunt, his pain had entirely gone, and no mark of the scorching was visible:

"Rash thy deed,
Mortal weed

To immortal flames applying;
Rasher trust
Has thing of dust,
On his own weak worth relying.
Strip thee of such fences vain,
Strip, and prove thy luck again."

Obedient to what he understood to be the meaning of his conductress, Halbert bared his arm to the shoulder, throwing down the remains of his sleeve, which no sooner touched the floor on which he stood than it collected itself together, shrivelled itself up, and was without any visible fire reduced to light tinder, which a sudden breath of wind dispersed into empty space. The White Lady, observing the surprise of the youth, immediately repeated—

"Mortal warp and mortal woof,
Cannot brook this charmed roof;
All that mortal art hath wrought,
In our cell returns to nought.
The molten gold returns to clay,
The polish'd diamond melts away;
All is alter'd, all is flown,
Nought stands fast but truth alone.
Not for that thy quest give o'er:
Courage! prove thy chance once more."

Emboldened by her words, Halbert Glendinning made a second effort, and, plunging his bare arm into the flame, took out the sacred volume without feeling either heat or inconvenience of any kind. Astonished, and almost terrified at his own success, he beheld the flame collect itself, and shoot up into one long and final stream, which seemed as if it would ascend to the very roof of the cavern, and then, sinking as suddenly, became totally extinguished. The deepest darkness ensued; but Halbert had no time to consider his situation, for the White Lady had already caught his hand, and they ascended to upper air with the same velocity with which they had sunk into the earth.

They stood by the fountain in the Corri-nan-shian when they emerged from the bowels of the earth; but on casting a bewildered glance around him, the youth was surprised to observe, that the shadows had fallen far to the east, and that the day was well nigh spent. He gazed on his conductress

ress for explanation, but her figure began to fade before his eyes—her cheeks grew paler, her features less distinct, her form became shadowy, and blended itself with the mist which was ascending the hollow ravine. What had late the symmetry of form, and the delicate, yet clear hues of feminine beauty, now resembled the flitting and pale ghost of some maiden who has died for love, as it is seen, indistinctly and by moon-light, by her perjured lover.

"Stay, spirit," said the youth, emboldened by his success in the subterranean dome, "thy kindness must not leave me, as one encumbered with a weapon he knows not how to wield. Thou must teach me the art to read, and to understand this volume; else what avails it me that I possess it?"

But the figure of the White Lady still waned before his eye, until it became an outline as pale and indistinct as that of the moon, when the winter morning is far advanced; and ere she had ended the following chaunt, she was entirely invisible:—

"Alas! alas!
Not ours the grace
These holy characters to trace:
Idle forms of painted air,
Not to us is given to share
The boon bestow'd on Adam's race.
With patience bide,
Heaven will provide
The fitting time, the fitting guide."

The form was already gone, and now the voice itself had melted away in melancholy cadence, softening, as if the Being who spoke had been slowly wafted from the spot where she had commenced her melody.

It was at this moment that Halbert felt the extremity of the terror which he had hitherto so manfully suppressed. The very necessity of exertion had given him spirit to make it, and the presence of the mysterious Being, while it was a subject of fear in itself, had nevertheless given him the sense of protection being near to him. It was when he could reflect with composure on what had passed, that a cold tremor shot across his limbs, his hair bristled, and he was afraid to look around lest he should find at his el-

bow something more frightful than the first vision. A breeze arising suddenly realized the beautiful and wild idea of the most imaginative of our modern bards*—

It fann'd his cheek, it raised his hair,
Like a meadow gale in spring;
It mingled strangely with his fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

The youth stood silent and astonished for a few minutes. It seemed to him that the extraordinary Being he had seen, half his terror, half his protectress, was still hovering on the gale which swept past him, and that she might again make herself sensible to his organs of sight. "Speak!" he said, wildly tossing his arms, "speak yet again—be once more present, lovely vision!—thrice have I now seen thee, yet the idea of thy invisible presence around or beside me, makes my heart beat faster than if the earth yawned and gave up a demon." But neither sound nor appearance indicated the

* Coleridge.

presence of the White Lady, and nothing preternatural beyond what he had already witnessed, was again audible or visible. Halbert, in the mean while, by the very exertion of again inviting the presence of this mysterious Being, had recovered his natural audacity. He looked around once more, and resumed his solitary path down the valley into whose recesses he had penetrated.

Nothing could be more strongly contrasted than the storm of passion with which he had bounded over stock and crag, in order to plunge himself into the Corri-nan-shian, and the sobered mood in which he now returned homeward, industriously seeking out the most practicable path, not from a wish to avoid danger, but that he might not by bodily exertion distract his attention, deeply fixed on the extraordinary scene which he had witnessed. In the former case, he had sought by hazard and bodily exertion to indulge at once the fiery excitation of passion, and to banish the cause of the excitement from his recollec-

tion; while now he studiously avoided all interruption to his contemplative walk, lest the difficulty of the way should interfere with, or disturb, his own deep reflections. Thus slowly pacing forth his course, with the air of a pilgrim rather than of a deer-hunter, Halbert about the close of the evening regained his paternal tower.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

